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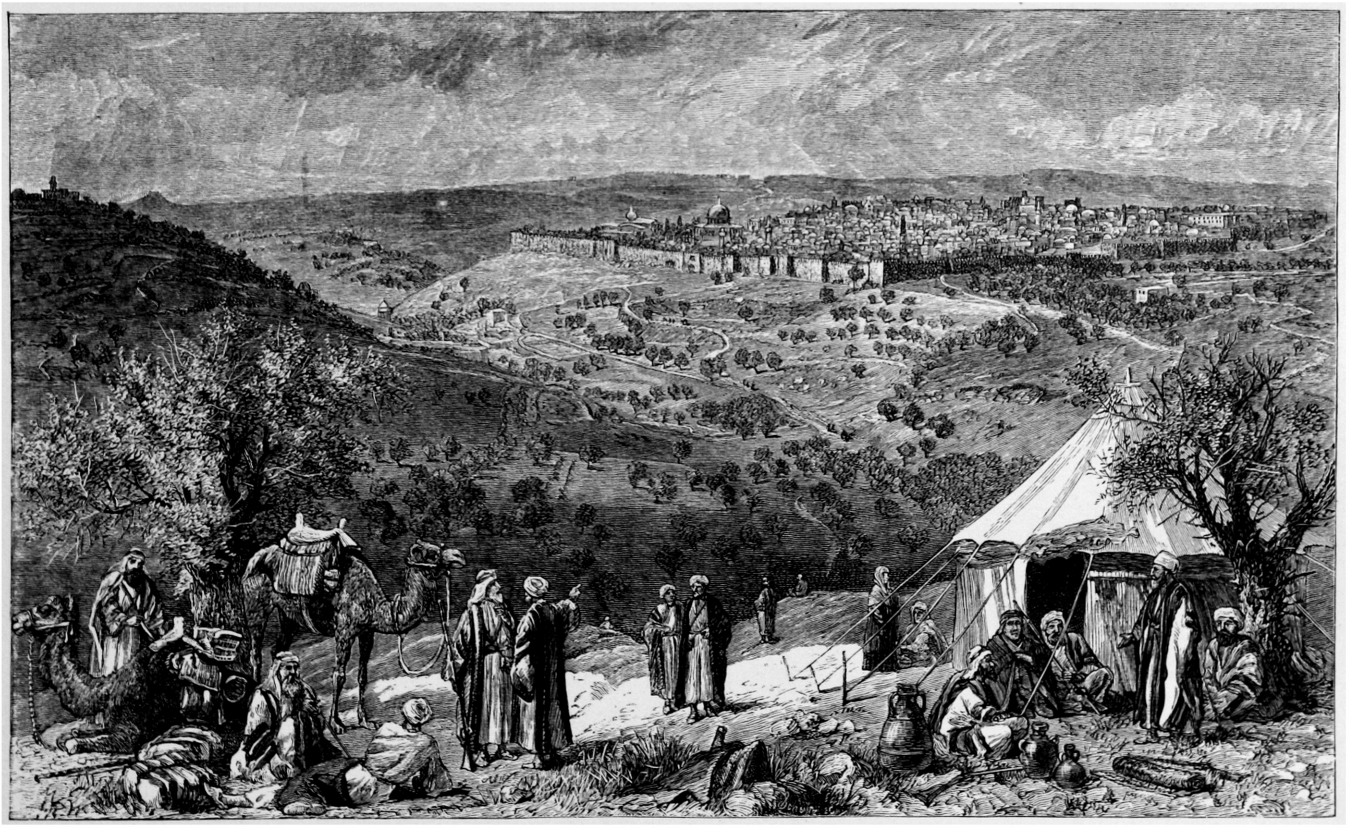
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NEW YORK

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EL KUDS—THE HOLY.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES AND THE CITY OF JERUSALEM.

The Land and the Book

OR

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN FROM THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, THE SCENES AND SCENERY, OF

THE HOLY LAND

SOUTHERN PALESTINE

AND

JERUSALEM

BY

WILLIAM M. THOMSON, D.D.

FORTY-FIVE YEARS A MISSIONARY IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE

140 ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS



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PREFACE.

DURING the last twenty-five years the attention of the Christian world has been directed to the Holy Land in ways and to an extent heretofore unknown. Learned and scientific explorers have penetrated every part of it, and given to the public the results of their researches. Commentaries, Bible dictionaries, books of travel, maps, plans, guide-books, pictures, and photographs have been greatly multiplied. The Palestine Exploration Fund of England has made a thorough survey of Palestine proper, and the American Exploration Society has sent several expeditions to the regions east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. In these and in other ways a great amount of new information in regard to Bible lands and the Bible itself has been accumulated; and the author has endeavored to incorporate in this work the most valuable results of modern research and discovery.

The main object being Biblical Illustration, the number of Scripture passages introduced is large. The Bible is made to speak for itself, in its own peculiar phraseology: hence the many direct, literal quotations. No consecutive comment on any particular book of the Bible is attempted, but the author selects from all such passages as contain or suggest the themes he desires to elucidate. This is his chosen field, the limit of his promise. For nearly half a

century he has resided amidst the scenes and the scenery described, and from mid-day to midnight, in winter and in summer, has gazed upon them with a joyous enthusiasm that never tired. First impressions, corrected and improved by subsequent study and examination, are now reproduced for the eye of the public and the heart of the pious.

In many departments of Biblical literature the student in Europe or America, surrounded by ample libraries, is in a better situation to carry on profitable inquiry than the pilgrim in the Holy Land, however long his loiterings or extended his rambles. But it is otherwise in respect to the scenes and the scenery of the Bible, and to the living manners and customs of the East which illustrate that blessed book. Here the actual observer is needed, not the distant and secluded student. To describe these things and such as these, one must have seen and felt them; and this the author has done through many years of vicissitude and adventure, and whatever of life and truthfulness there may be in his pen-pictures is due to this fact. Where he has been he proposes to guide his reader, through that "good land" of mountain and vale and lake and river: to the shepherd's tent, the peasant's hut, the palace of kings, the hermit's cave, the temple of the gods—to the haunts of the living and the sepulchres of the dead—to muse on what *has been* and converse with what *is*, and learn from all what they teach concerning the oracles of God. A large part of these pages was actually written in the open country. On sea-shore or sacred lake, on hill-side or mountain-top, under the olive, or the oak, or the shadow of a great rock—there the author lived, thought, felt, and wrote, and place and circumstance have, no doubt, given color and character to many parts of the work. He would not have it otherwise. The Bible, at once his guide, pattern, and text, is pervaded with the air of

rural life; and He who came from heaven to earth for man's redemption loved the country, not the city. To the wilderness and the mountain He retired to meditate and pray. Thither He led His disciples and the listening multitudes; and from seed-time and harvest, and flocks and shepherds, and birds and flowers, He drew His sweetest lessons of instruction. In that identical land, amidst the same scenes, has the author of this work earnestly cultivated communion and intimate correspondence with that Divine Teacher, and with the internal and external life of the Book of God; and what he has found and felt he has tried to trace upon the silent page for other eyes to see and other hearts to enjoy.

A new generation of readers and students of the Sacred Scriptures has arisen, and the interest in Biblical studies has been greatly increased and extended. Any work designed to meet the wants of those who now daily search the Scriptures should abound in illustrations, both textual and pictorial, which are accurate and reliable in detail, and the information imparted must be brought down to the present day. No effort has been spared which was found necessary to reach such a result. The pictorial illustrations are entirely new, prepared specially for this work from photographs taken by the author, and from the best existing materials, and they have been drawn and engraved, under his superintendence, by artists in London, Paris, and New York. The thanks of the author are due to his publishers for the liberal manner in which this most costly part of the work has been executed.

Great attention has been bestowed upon the spelling of proper names, and all who have any knowledge of the subject will appreciate its importance. It is extremely perplexing to ordinary readers to meet with a dozen different ways of spelling the name of the same person, place, or thing.

To avoid this confusion it is absolutely necessary to have some well-defined system, and the one adopted for this work is that of Dr. Edward Robinson. This system, drawn up by Dr. Robinson, and his fellow-traveller, Dr. Eli Smith, was submitted to the general meeting of the Syrian Mission. After careful examination, in which the author participated, it was adopted by the mission; and it has gradually grown in public favor—has been accepted by the Palestine Exploration Fund of England, by the American Exploration Society, by recent writers, and in guide-books to the Holy Land. In addition to the names which occur in our English Bible, the present Arabic names of places are added in all important cases—a feature, in this work, of much importance.

This volume of the Land and Book is supplied with two carefully prepared indexes—one of texts, and the other of names and subjects—and the attention of the reader is directed to them, as they will facilitate reference to those parts of the work where the Scripture passages illustrated, and the subjects treated of, are to be found.

And now, with the cheerful hope and fervent prayer that our pleasant pilgrimage together through the earthly Canaan may hereafter be resumed and perpetuated in the heavenly, the author bids his courteous reader farewell.

W. M. T.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE land where the Word-Made-Flesh dwelt among men must ever continue to be an important part of Revelation; and Palestine may be fairly regarded as the divinely prepared tablet whereupon God's messages to men have been graven in ever-living characters by the Great Publisher of Glad Tidings. That this fact invests the geography of the Holy Land with special importance, needs neither proof nor illustration. But there are other considerations which impart to it a deeper and more practical interest. It is from this land we have received that marvellous spiritual language through which we gain nearly all true religious knowledge. Here it was devised and first used, and here are found its best illustrations. To form an adequate nomenclature for the thoughts of God, and the wants of mankind, was the problem; and it would not be difficult to show that this was a matter of supreme importance, and not easily accomplished—one wholly beyond the unaided skill of man to achieve; nor could it be effected once for all, and suddenly, by any act even of Almighty power. We learn from history that it required fifteen centuries of time, and an endless array of providential arrangements, co-operating with human and superhuman agents and agencies, to bring this

medium of intercourse between God and man to the needed perfection.

Numerous and complicated as were the instrumentalities employed, and extending over many generations of wonderful history, still they may be all grouped under two fundamental expedients—

The selecting, training, and governing of a peculiar people; and,

The creating and preparing an appropriate home for them.

Abraham and Canaan, the Hebrew Nation and the Land of Promise, the long ongoing and outworking of the Mosaic Economy, in conjunction with the physical phenomena of their earthly Inheritance—by and through all these did the Spirit of Inspiration evolve and perfect man's religious language. Palestine, fashioned and furnished by the Creator's hand, was the arena, and the people of Israel were the actors brought upon it, and made to perform their parts by the Divine Master. When the end and aim had been reached, the language of the kingdom fully developed and matured, the King himself appeared, and the Gospel of Salvation was sent forth on its high mission of mercy among the nations of the earth.

Like other books, the Bible has had a home, a birthplace; but, beyond all other examples, this birthplace has given form and color to its language. The underlying basis of this wonderful dialect of the kingdom of heaven is found in the land itself. But as in the resurrection "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual," so, in the process of developing man's

religious language, it was preceded by and grew out of the natural and the mundane. From the material and the human were evolved the spiritual and the divine. The material out of which was formed our spiritual dialect was of the earth earthy, requiring to be transformed and transfigured ere it could become a fit medium for things heavenly.

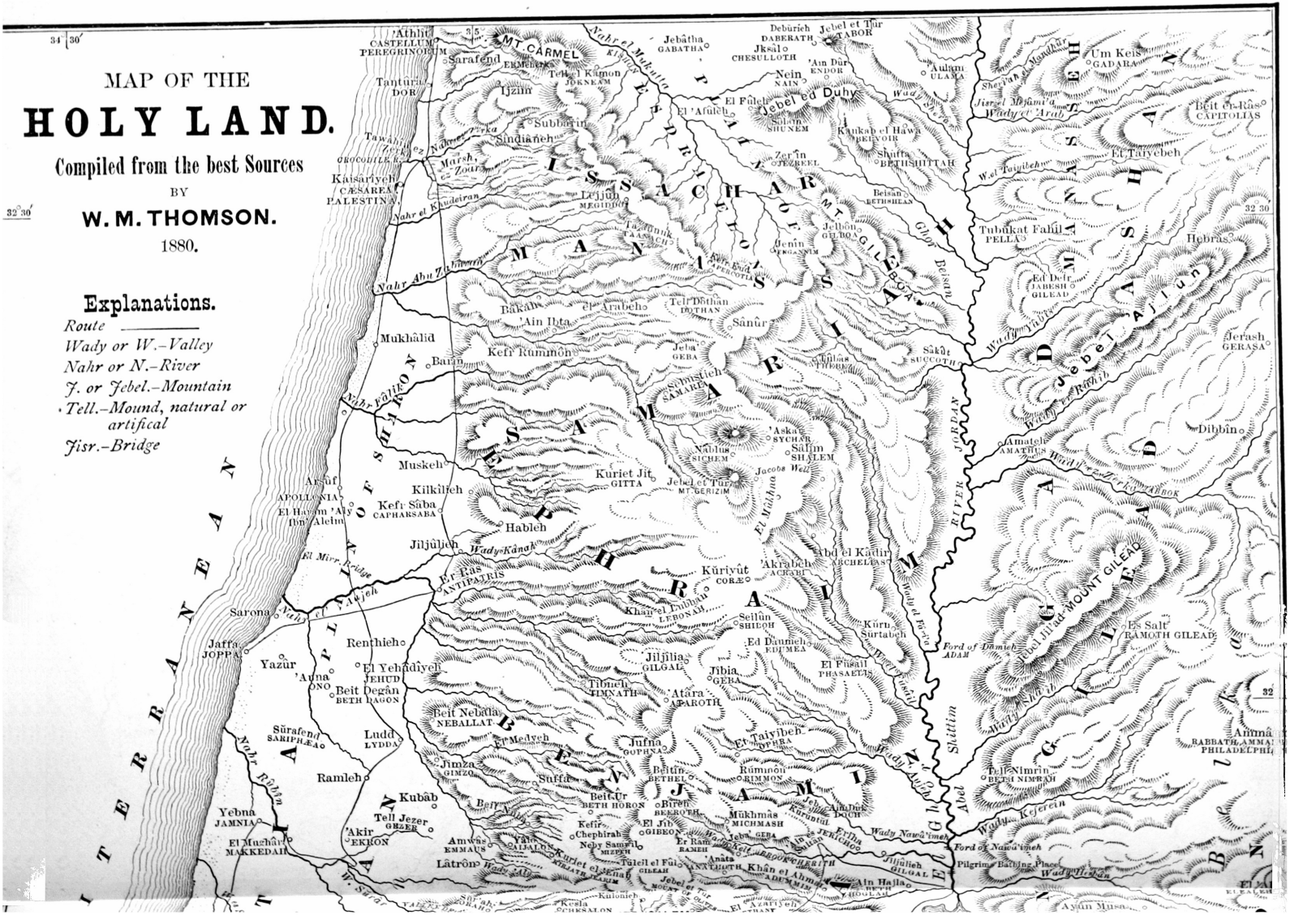
To see and to study to the best advantage this transfiguration of language, we must resort to Palestine, where it was first learned and spoken. That land, we repeat, has had an all-pervading influence upon the costume and character of the Bible. Without the former, the latter, as we now have it, could not have been produced. To ascertain this fact, and to notice by what process of analogy and of contrast the physical and the mundane came to signify and illustrate things spiritual and heavenly, may well occupy much of our attention during this pilgrimage through the Holy Land.

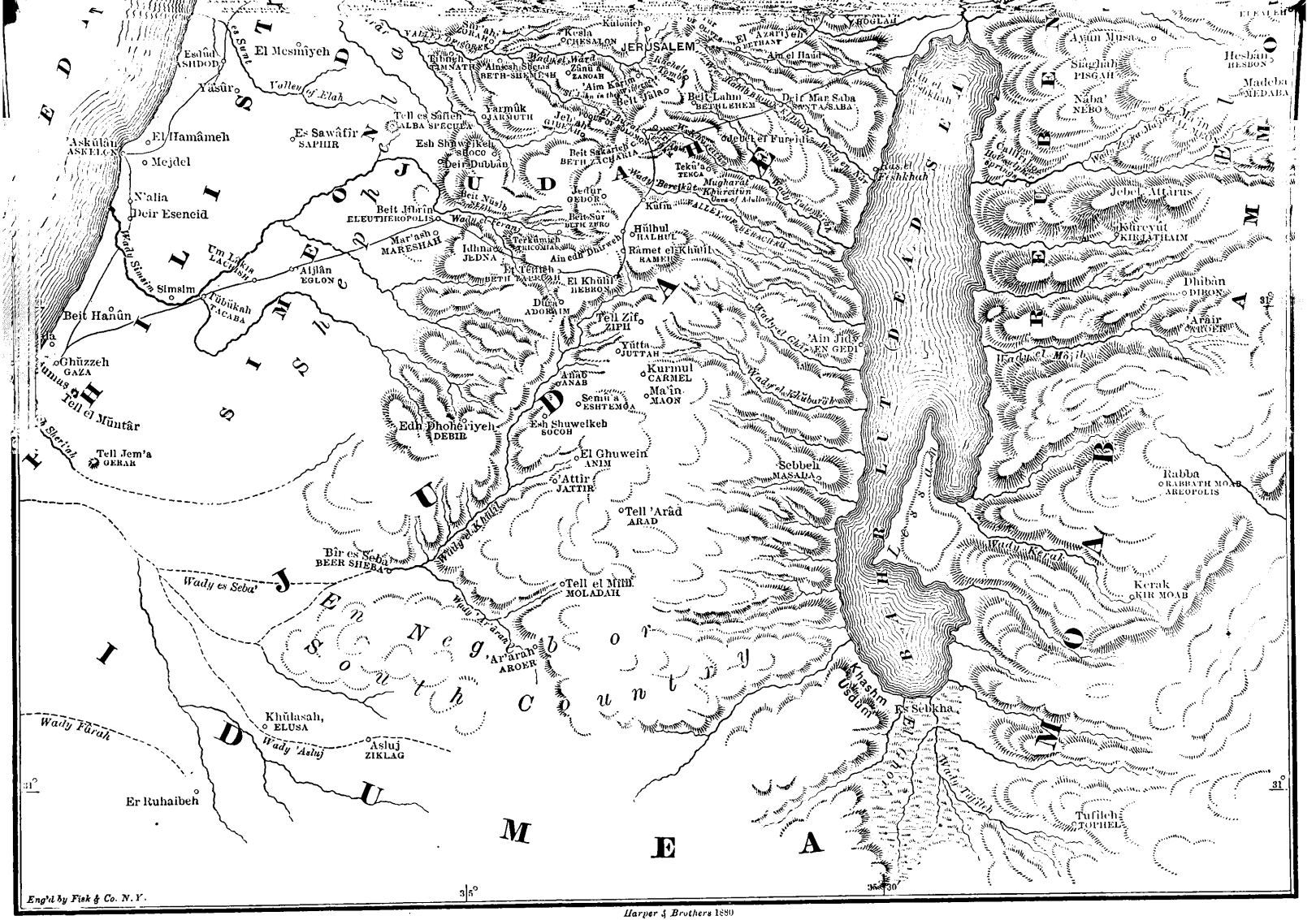
Let us, therefore, deal reverently with it, walk softly over those acres once trodden by the feet of patriarchs, prophets, and sacred poets, and most of all by the Son of God himself. Let us put off the soiled sandal of worldliness and sin as we enter this consecrated domain. There is design in this grouping of mountains and plains, hills and valleys, lakes and rivers, the desert and the sea, with all their vegetable and animal products, and in the marvellous and miraculous incidents and phenomena in the sacred record. These things were not the result of blind chance, were not merely natural, but beyond and above that, for we see in them the supernatural and the divine.

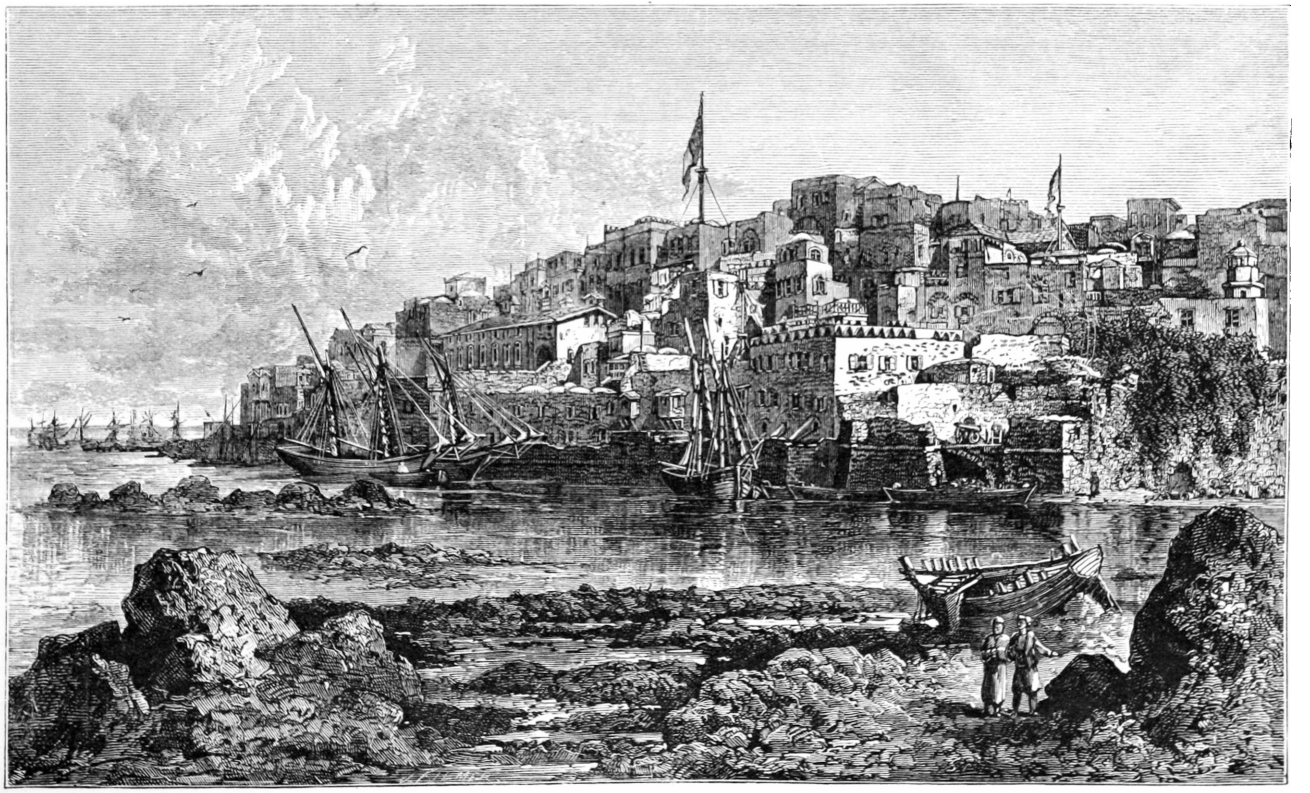
The Land and the Book constitute the all-perfect text of the Word of God, and can be best studied together. To

read the one by the light of the other has been the privilege of the author for more than forty years, and the governing purpose in publishing is to furnish additional facilities for this delightful study to those who have not been thus favored.

The sites and scenes described in the work were visited many times during the author's long residence in the country; and the results, so far as they bear on Biblical illustration, appear in the current narrative. The conversations are held in the open country, on horseback, by the way-side, or beneath the travellers' tent, and the reader is at liberty to regard himself as the compagnon de voyage; for, in the mind of the author, his fellow-traveller is not a mythical abstraction, whose office is merely to introduce new themes, but a real and true-hearted friend, in full sympathy with the purpose and aim of our pilgrimage through the Holy Land.


MAP OF THE
HOLY LAND.
Compiled from the best Sources
BY
W. M. THOMSON.
1880.
Explanations.
Route
Wady or W.–Valley
Nahr or N.–River
J. or Jebel.–Mountain
Tell.–Mound, natural or artifical
Jisr.–Bridge
MEDITERRANEAN
PHILISTIA
SHARON
SAMARIA
JUDÆA
GALILEE
PERÆA
MT. CARMEL
Nahr el Mukatta
Athlit
CASTELLUM PEREGRINORUM
Sarafend
EKMEEKS
Tantura
DOR
Tell el Kimon
JOKNEAM
Ijzim
Jebâtha
GABATHA
Deburieh
DABERATH
Jebel et Tur
TABOR
Jksâl
CHESULLOTH
Nein
NAIN
'Ain Dûr
ENDOR
Aulam
ULAMA
Um Keis
GADARA
Jebel ed Duhy
Subbarin
Sindianeh
El 'Afuleh
Solûm
SHUNEM
Kaukab el Hawa
HEBRON
Shutta
BETHSHITTAH
Zer'in
JEZREEL
Beisan
BETHSHEAN
Beit el Râs
CAPITOLIAS
Et Tarîyebeh
Tawahin Zerka
CROCODILE R.
Kaisariyeh
CÆSAREA PALESTINA
Nahr el Khudeiran
Marsh, Zoar
Liljûn
MEGIDDO
Tell Dothan
DOTHAN
Jelbôn
GILBOA
Jenîn
ENGANNIM
Ed Deir
JABESH GILEAD
Tubûkat Fahil
PELLA
Hebras
Mukhâlid
Kefr Rummon
Jeba
GEBA
Sânûr
Sâkût
SUCCOTH
Jerash
GERASA
Nahr Falîk
Baka'ah
'Ain Ibta
El 'Arabeh
Schastieh
SAMARIA
'Aska
SYCHAR
Salim
SHILEM
Nablus
SHECHEM
Jacob's Well
Jebel et Tûr
MT. GERIZIM
Kuriet Jît
GITTA
Muskeh
Kilkîleh
Arsûf
APOLLONIA
El Haram 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim
Kefr Sâba
CAPHARSABA
Amatele
AMATHUS
Dibbîn
Jebel Ajlun
Wady Yabis
Wady Zerka Main
Hableh
Jiljûlieh
Wady Kânah
El Mirr Bridge
Nahr el Aujeh
Er Ras
ANTIPATRIS
Kûriyût
CORÆ
'Akrabeh
ACRABI
'Abd el Kâdir
ASCHELASH
Wady el Fâra
Sarona
Jaffa
JOPPA
Renthieh
Yazûr
'Anna
ONO
El Yehudîyeh
JEHUD
Beit Degân
BETH DAGON
Khan el Lubbân
LEBONAH
Seilûn
SHILOH
Kûrn Surtabeh
Ford of Damieh
ADAM
E. Salt
RAMOTH GILEAD
Jebel Jil'ad
MOUNT GILEAD
Jiljilia
GILGAL
Ed Daunieh
EDUMEA
El Fusâil
PHASAELIS
Jibia
GEBA
Tibneh
TIMNATH
'Atâra
ATAROTH
Beit Nebâla
NEBALLAT
Et Medyeh
Et Tairybeh
OPHRAH
Wady Auja
Shittim
Wady Kefrein
Sûrafend
SARIPHÆA
Ludd
LYDDA
Nahr Rûbin
Ramleh
Jimzo
GIMZO
Jufna
GOPHNA
Beitûr
BETHEL
Rûmmon
RIMMON
Tell Nimrin
BETH NIMRAH
Ammân
RABBATH AMMON
PHILADELPHIA
Suffa
Beit Ûr
BETH HORON
Birch
BEEROTH
Mukhmâs
MICHMASH
Kefr
Chephirah
El Jîb
GIBEON
Er Ram
RAMEH
Jeba
GEBA
Jericho
Ford of Nawa'imeh
Pilgrims' Bathing Place
Wady Nawa'imeh
Kubâb
Tell Jezer
GEZER
Yebna
JAMNIA
'Akir
EKRON
El Muchâir
MAKKEDAH
Amwas
EMMAUS
Yalo
AIJALON
Neby Samwil
MIZPEH
Kuriet el Enab
KIRIATH JEARIM
Tuleil el Fûl
GIBEAH
Anâta
ANATHOTH
Khân el Ahmar
ADUMMIM
Jebel et Tûr
MOUNT OF OLIVES
Jiljûlieh
GILGAL
'Ain Hajla
BETH HOGLAH
Latrôn
Wady Sâlim
Kulonieh
Kesla
CHESALON
Wady Kelt
Wady Farah
Ain Musa
Jebel Osha
Jebel Jermuk
Jebel Sartabeh
Jebel Jil'ad
Jebel Ajlun
Jebel Hauran
Jebel Shihan
Jebel Hauran
Jebel Shihan
Jebel Jil'ad
Jebel Ajlun
Jebel Jermuk
Jebel Osha
Jebel Sartabeh
Jebel et Tûr


JERUSALEM
Kesla
CHESALON
Kuloniah
Ain Karim
ZANOAH
Beit Jala
BETHLEHEM
Deir Mar Saba
MAR SABA
Tell es Sûfeh
ALBA SPECULA
Yarmûk
JARMUTH
Esh Shuweikeh
SOCO
Deir Dubbân
Beit Sakaria
BETH ZACHARIA
Tekû'a
TEKOA
Jedur
GEDOR
Beit Nusib
Beit Sûr
BETH ZUR
Kûfin
Hûlhul
HALHUL
Rămet el Khûlil
RAMEH
Idhna
JEDNA
Et Teffûh
BETH TAPPUAH
El Khûlil
HEBRON
Dûra
ADORAIM
Tell Zif
ZIPH
Yûtta
JUTTAH
'Ain Jidy
EN GEDI
Kurmul
CARMEL
Ma'in
MAON
Anâb
ANAB
Semû'a
ESHTEMOA
Edh Dhoheriyeh
DEBIR
Esh Shuweikeh
SOCOH
El Ghuwein
ANIM
'Attîr
JATTIR
Sebbeh
MASADA
Tell 'Arâd
ARAD
Tell el Milh
MOLADAH
Bir es Seba'
BEER SHEBA
Wady es Seba'
Wady el Milh
'Ar'arah
AROER
Khûlasah
ELUSA
Asluj
ZIKLAG
Wady Fûrah
Wady Asluj
Er Ruhaibeh
Wady Simsim
Simsim
Beit Hanûn
Ghuzzeh
GAZA
Tell el Mûntâr
Tell Jem'a
GERAR
Askûlân
ASKELON
El Hamâmeh
Mejdel
N'alia
Deir Eseneid
Es Sawâfir
SAPHIR
Esdûd
ASHDOD
El Mesmîyeh
Yasûr
Valley of Elah
Belt Jibrîn
ELEUTHEROPOLIS
Mar'ash
MARESHAH
Aijlân
EGLON
Um Lakis
LACHISH
Tûbûkah
TACABA
Wady es Sheri'ah
Wady Simsim
Wady Beit Hanûn
Wady Ghuzzeh
Wady Sheri'ah
Wady Jerâr
Wady Ar'arah
Wady Khalil
Wady Beersheba
Wady Ghuzzeh
Wady Sheri'ah
Wady Simsim
Wady Beit Hanûn
Wady Fûrah
Wady Asluj



JAFFA, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

THE LAND AND THE BOOK.

I.

JAFFA.

Arrival at Jaffa.—Difficulty of Landing.—First View of the Land of Promise.—Main Thoroughfare.—Biârah.—Antiquity of Jaffa.—Andromeda and Perseus.—M. Scaurus.—Modern Jaffa.—Dangerous Roadstead.—Sæwulf.—The Prophet Jonah.—Whales in the Mediterranean.—Jonah's Gourd.—Tarshish.—Pious Language of the Orientals.—Jonah in Nineveh.—Preparations for the Journey.—Gardens of Jaffa.—Persian Water-wheel.—Shadûf.—Methods of Irrigation.—Water-wheel at Hamath.—Watering with the Foot.—Fruits of Jaffa.—How best to observe in Palestine.—Moses's View of the Promised Land.—Oriental Fair.—Dorcas.—City Gate, and Biblical Allusions to it.—Saracenic Fountain.—Wanderings through the City.—Jaffa and its Surroundings.—House of Simon the Tanner.—Tanneries.—Potter and Wheel.—Custom of breaking Defiled Vessels.—Sherd at the Hearth and the Pit.—Palestine the Home of the Bible.—Mission of Biblical Poets.—Analysis of the First Psalm.—Natural Basis of our Religious Language.

April 4th.

I HAVE been here for several days awaiting your arrival, watching the weather with no little anxiety, and fearing lest the sea should be too rough to permit of a landing, in which case you would have been taken up to Haifa or even Beirût.

That would have been a serious inconvenience to us both; and, indeed, the captain, after we left Port Said, thought it would very likely occur. And even when anchored in this most unquiet of roadsteads, the prospect of getting on shore was far from encouraging. Only one boat came out to us, and that was so tossed and buffeted by the waves, that it was nearly impossible to get into it, and not a little dangerous afterwards.

A not uncommon experience. But the storm is now over, you

are safe on land, and we may count upon fair weather for some time to come. Let us extricate ourselves from this noisy multitude around the landing. Give your keys to our energetic cook, Salîm, and, with the assistance of the porters, he will pass your baggage through the Custom-house, and bring it out to our pleasant quarters in one of Jaffa's far-famed orange gardens.

My first view of this Land of Promise has been gloomy and discouraging to the last degree. A long low reach of featureless coast, dimly visible through the spray from angry waves, was all that could be seen at early dawn, as we approached. Not a hill, nor a house, nor even a boat, relieved the dismal solitude, until we reached this tumultuous roadstead in front of the town. I can readily believe, however, that in a calm, clear day Jaffa and its immediate surroundings would present a very pretty and smiling prospect, and striking appearance to one approaching from the sea; so I shall make haste to dismiss my first impressions, and with other eyes look upon these scenes as fancy drew and colored them in early boyhood; and even if every prospect does not please, I am resolved to be content with things as I find them, and make the best of them.

A sensible resolution, and one which will not demand any extraordinary amount of self-control to observe; for there are within the borders of the Holy Land lofty mountains covered with snow; hills and valleys and wide plains carpeted with gay flowers; lakes, rivers, and streams baptized with beauty; and sacred sites and scenes innumerable, and of the very deepest interest.

New and strange they certainly are, at any rate. This street along which we are threading our way, with some difficulty and a little danger, is a genuine novelty.

It is Jaffa's one thoroughfare, through which nearly all her commerce to and from the sea has to pass; and as it is narrow, and crooked, and crowded, one must keep a sharp lookout, to avoid unpleasant collisions.

Of that we have already been admonished more than once. We were nearly run down by a huge bale of goods, borne along on poles by eight stout porters, keeping step to a monotonous chant. Our next encounter was with Bedawîn Arabs carrying long spears,

and riding horses wilder than themselves. We stepped into a shop to let them pass.

Yes; and if I had not pushed you suddenly into a recess, you would have had an awkward adventure with that string of loaded camels.

My attention was attracted, for the moment, by a family of young pups, lying, with their mother, in the middle of the narrow street, in imminent danger of being crushed to death, when those camels were fairly upon me ere I was aware of their approach, for their soft, spongy feet give no warning to the wayfarer.

Dogs are too numerous in these streets to call for special sympathy; and you will soon learn to let them alone, if they will do the same by you. But both they and the camels are very Biblical animals, and we shall have frequent occasion to refer to them. At present, let us pass out of the city through this open space, in front of what was once Jaffa's only gate.

The crowd is more dense, noisy, and picturesque here than within the city. What tempting groups for the pencil or the brush of the artist and the photographer's camera!

We shall have opportunity hereafter to contemplate them at our leisure; therefore, we will continue our walk to the biârah that has been placed at our disposal by an old friend, who delights in acts of Oriental hospitality.

What is a biârah?

It is the local name for an enclosed garden, planted with orange and other fruit-bearing trees, and irrigated with water from a well or bîr. The name is very appropriate, since every tree, and bush, and flower in the biârah depends for its very life upon the water from the bîr. You will soon become familiar with this and other matters connected with these delightful gardens, for here we are at the entrance to our own.

This is indeed refreshing; and the sudden transition from the discomforts of the ship to this quiet and fragrant garden reminds one of the enchanting scenes in the Arabian Nights.

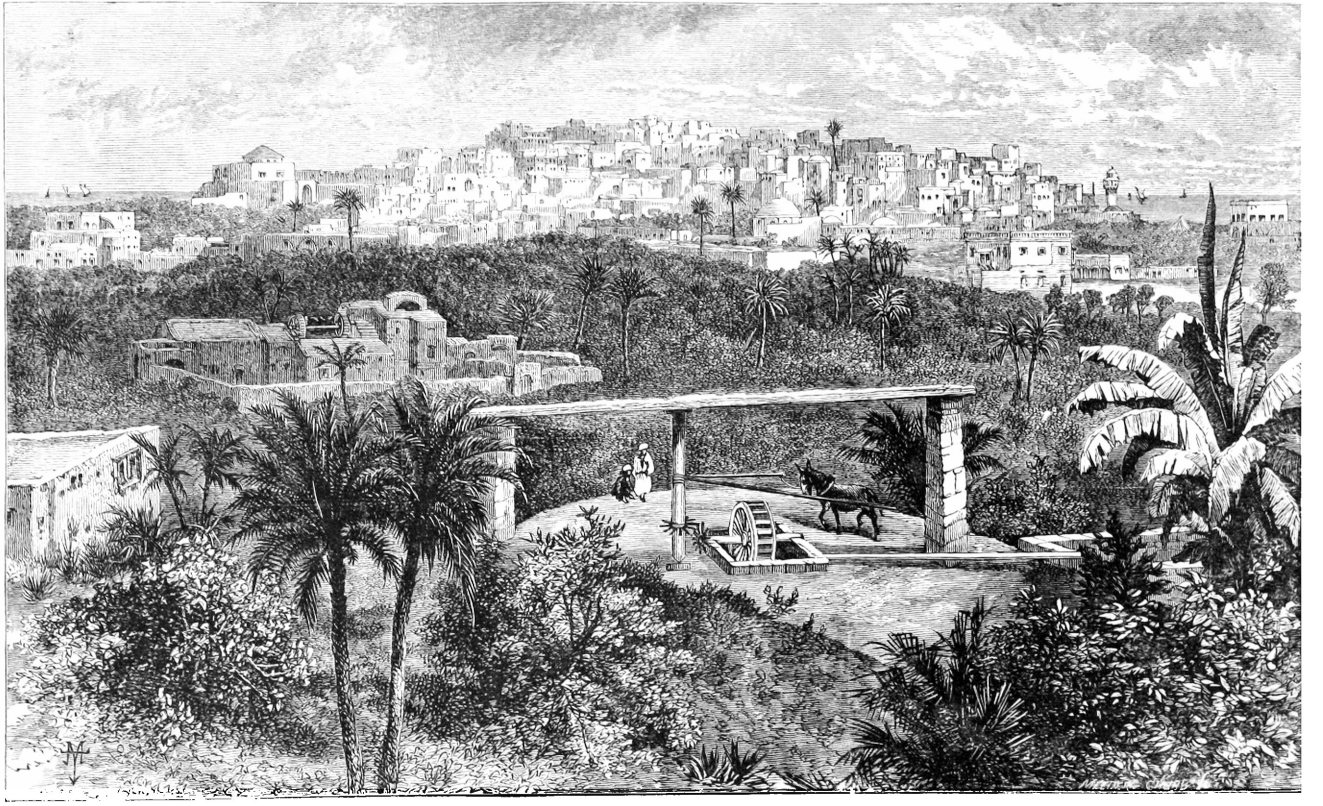
I am glad you find our quarters so agreeable. Make the most of them while the illusion lasts, for you will be disenchanted only too soon.

So I have been told by others; but I will not allow such admonitions to chill the fervor of present enjoyment, or to cast a shadow on the bright promise of the future. You must not expect me to forget all at once that I am actually in Joppa, and for the first time. Joppa! The mere name is a romance.

> Oldest of cities! Sidon of the north,
> And Kirjath-arba of the rocky south,
> And Egypt's Zoan, cannot equal thee;
> Andromeda and Perseus, if the lay
> Of classic fable speak the truth, were here;
> Monarchs of Palestine, and kings of Tyre,
> And the brave Maccabee, have all been here;
> And Cestius, with his Roman plunderers;
> And Saladin, and Baldwin, and the host
> Of fierce Crusaders from the British north,
> Once shook their swords above thee, and thy blood
> Flowed down like water to thine ancient sea.

To whose poetic inspiration you are indebted for these lines I know not; but they contain a pretty fair résumé of Jaffa's claims to historic celebrity, which we may expand for a little on the lower level of ordinary prose.

Jaffa is in reality one of the oldest cities in the world. It was given to Dan in the distribution of the land by Joshua, and it has been known to history ever since. It owes its existence to the low ledge of rocks which extends into the sea from the extremity of the little cape on which the city stands, and forms a small harbor. Insignificant as it is, and insecure, yet there being no other on all this coast, it was sufficient to cause a city to spring up around it even in the earliest times, and to sustain its life through numberless changes of dynasties, races, and religions, down to the present hour. It was, in fact, the only harbor of any notoriety possessed by the Jews throughout the greater part of their national existence. To it the timber for both the temples of Jerusalem was brought from Lebanon; and no doubt a lucrative trade in cedar and pine was always carried on through it with the nations who had possession of that goodly mountain. Through it, also, nearly all the foreign commerce of the Jews was conducted, until the artificial port of Cæsarea was built by Herod. Hither Jonah came to find a ship



JAFFA AND ITS GARDENS.

in which to flee from the presence of the Lord, and from it he sailed for Tarshish.

By-the-bye, do you think there is any foundation for the idea of Reland and others, that the story about Andromeda and Perseus originated from some confused account of Jonah and the whale, which had reached the Greeks through the sailors of Tarshish?

Possibly; and it is certainly curious that Pliny, after alluding to the story of Andromeda, says that M. Scaurus, among other wonderful relics, showed the bones of a wild beast brought, during his ædileship, to Rome from Joppa, a walled town of Judæa. The length was forty feet, the elevation of the ribs greater than the height of an Indian elephant, and the thickness of the skin was a foot and a half! This may well have been a whale, if not the identical one in whose belly Jonah passed three days. The fact, also, that in the mythical fable of Perseus and Andromeda the name Iapolis occurs as that of a city connected with the same, strongly favors the original identity of the stories. But Jaffa has a history not made up of fables, and, alas! for the most part, written in blood. Scarcely any other town has been so often overthrown, sacked, pillaged, burned, and rebuilt. It would be tedious to enter into the minute detail of these disasters, and they may be gathered from the Bible, the books of the Maccabees, Josephus, the Greek and Roman historians, Eusebius, Jerome, and others of the fathers, and from the chronicles of the Crusades in the Gesta Dei per Francos. In our day it has acquired an unhappy notoriety in connection with Bonaparte, the plague, and the poisoning of his sick soldiers. I myself was shut up within it for forty days in 1834, while it was besieged by the mountaineers in revolt against Ibrahim Pasha. Mr. Anutun Murad, our consul at the time, told me that the present city was then not a hundred years old. In consequence of the pirates who infested this coast during the early life of his father, Jaffa was entirely deserted, and the inhabitants retired to Ramleh and Ludd. He himself remembered when there was only a single guard-house, occupied by a few soldiers, who gave notice to the merchants in Ramleh when a ship arrived. With this agrees the account of the desolation of Tyre at the same period and from the same cause. Such facts reveal the wretched state of the country during those

times of utter anarchy. When Bonaparte came here, however, Jaffa had again risen to some importance, and it has been growing ever since. Forty years ago the inhabitants of the city and its gardens were about six thousand; now they must be fifteen thousand at least, and commerce has increased at even a greater ratio. Several sources of prosperity account for the existence and rapid increase of Jaffa. It is the natural landing-place of pilgrims to Jerusalem, Christians, Jews, and Moslems, and they have given rise to a considerable trade. The Holy City itself has also been constantly growing in importance during the present generation. Then there are extensive establishments for the manufacture of soap, not only here but in Ramleh, Ludd, Nâblus, and Jerusalem, much of which is exported from this port to the cities along the coast, to Egypt, and even to Asia Minor through Tarsus. The fruit trade from Jaffa is likewise quite considerable, and lately there have been large shipments of grain to Europe. Add to this that silk is now being cultivated along the river 'Aujeh, and in the gardens about the city, and the present prosperity of Jaffa is fully explained. And unless European enterprise shall hereafter construct a railroad which will carry off these sources of wealth to some more secure harbor, Jaffa must continue to rise in importance for ages to come. The harbor, however, is very inconvenient and insecure. Vessels of any considerable burden must lie out in the open roadstead—a very uneasy berth at all times; and even a moderate wind will oblige them to slip their cables and run out to sea, or seek anchorage at Haifa, sixty miles distant.

Jaffa is equally celebrated for her dangerous harbor and for her fruitful gardens. Most modern travellers allude to this fact.

You need not limit the remark to modern times. Sæwulf, who came here nearly eight hundred years ago, thus reports his experience: "The very day we came in sight of the port one said to me, I believe by divine inspiration, 'Sir, go on shore to-day, lest a storm come on in the night, which will render it impossible to land to-morrow.' When I heard this I was suddenly seized with a great desire of landing, and, having hired a boat, went into it with all my companions; but, before I had reached the shore, the sea was troubled, and became continually more tempestuous. We landed, how-

ever, with God's grace, without hurt; and entering the city, weary and hungry, we secured a lodging, and reposed ourselves that night. But next morning, as we were returning from church, we heard the roaring of the sea and the shouts of the people, and saw that everybody was in confusion and astonishment. We were also dragged along with the crowd to the shore, where we saw the waves swelling higher than mountains, and innumerable bodies of drowned persons of both sexes scattered over the beach, while the fragments of ships were scattered on every side." He then continues, giving a most appalling description of the awful shipwrecks and death, and closes by asserting that out of thirty very large ships, all laden with palmers and merchandise, scarcely seven remained safe when he left the shore. "Of persons of both sexes there perished more than a thousand that day. Indeed, no eye ever beheld a greater misfortune in the space of a single day; from all which God snatched us by his grace; to whom be honor and glory forever. Amen."

After making very large abatements from the manifest exaggerations of this account, certain things in it are quite interesting, and accord well with my own experience. It is implied that the roadstead is liable to sudden and unexpected storms, which stir up a tumultuous sea in a very short time.

To the truth of this I can testify; and I also approve of the advice of Sæwulf's friend, to come on shore as soon as possible.

Jaffa's sea is not to be trusted. When the Egyptian fleet came here in 1834, with troops to suppress the rebellion in the mountains, I took a boat, with three men to row it, and started to visit the fleet. It was a bright, calm morning in the middle of summer; but a furious wind from the south-west arose suddenly, and after rowing for two hours, without reaching the ships at all, we were driven far to the north; and finally a huge wave, with our boat on its back, rushed us far up on the sandy beach, and fortunately left us there.

The landing, also, is most inconvenient, and often extremely dangerous. More boats upset, and more lives are lost in the breakers at the north end of the ledge of rocks that defend the inner harbor, than anywhere else on this coast. I have been in imminent danger

myself, with all my family in the boat, and never look without a shudder at this treacherous port, with its noisy surf tumbling over the rocks, as if on purpose to swallow up unfortunate boats. This is the true monster which has devoured many an Andromeda, for whose deliverance no gallant Perseus was at hand.

No traveller can visit Jaffa without being reminded of the history and adventures of the prophet Jonah. We know that he embarked from this city when he attempted "to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord;" but where he landed after the tempest and his marvellous cruise with the whale is, I suppose, wholly unknown. Several places along the head of the Mediterranean claim the honor; and Josephus says "he was vomited out upon the Euxine Sea"—a very indefinite expression, but far enough from here certainly.

I care very little about these discrepancies as to the place. There are other questions, however, of far greater interest. The Bible says that "the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah;"[1] and in Matthew it is called a whale by our Saviour.[2] Now, if I am correctly informed, there are no whales in the Mediterranean.

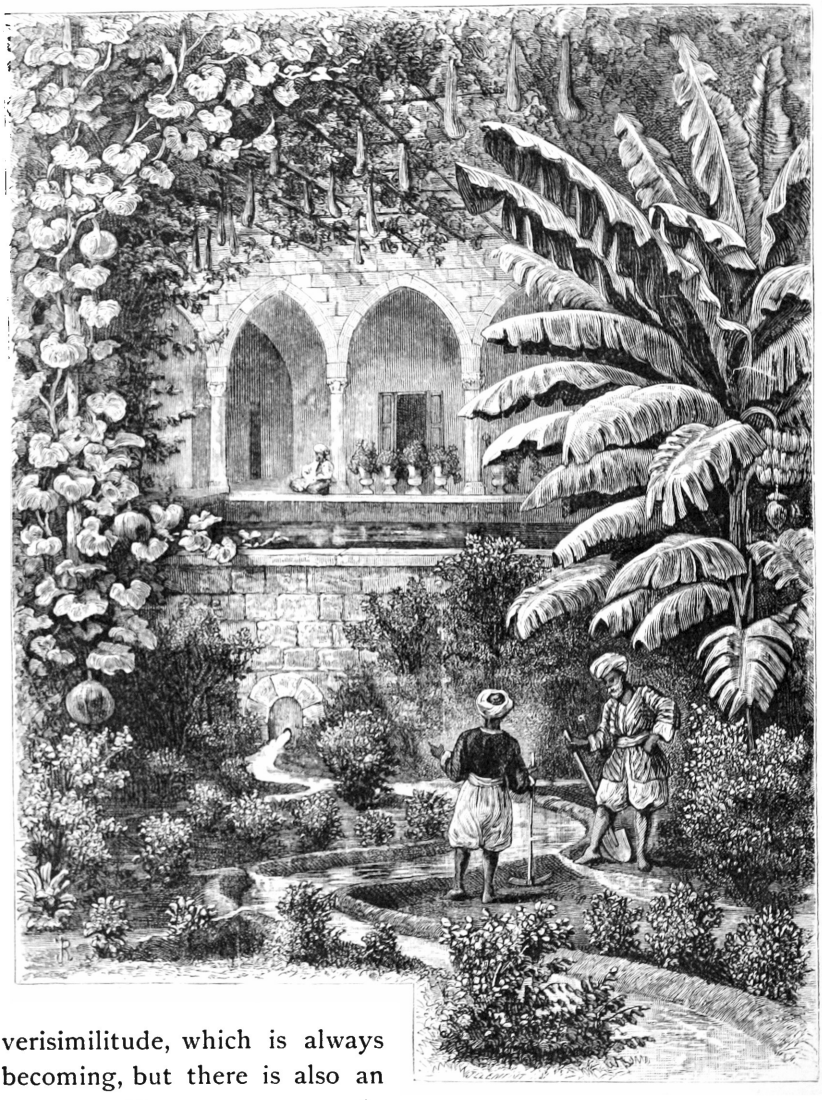
It is by no means certain that whales are no longer found in the Mediterranean; still, we have a right to suggest that the multiplication of ships, after the time of Jonah, frightened them out of it, as other causes have driven all lions out of Palestine, where they were once numerous. It is well known that some of the best fishing stations, even in the great oceans, have been abandoned by the whales because of the multitude of whalers that visited them. Up to the time of Jonah, navigation was in its infancy, ships were few and small, and they kept mostly along the shores, leaving the interior undisturbed. Whales may, therefore, have then been common in the Mediterranean; and there are well-attested instances on record of the appearance of huge marine creatures in this sea in ancient days. Some of these may have been whales. I have repeatedly seen the grampus in the deep sea west of Corsica, and others assert that they met with genuine whales in the same neighborhood, and elsewhere in the Mediterranean; and though I have nev-

[1] Jonah i. 17. [2] Matt. xii. 40.

er been so fortunate myself, I can scarcely believe that intelligent observers, mariners and others, some of whom were experienced whalers, could have been deceived in this matter. Indeed, that whales are occasionally stranded in this sea, even in our day, has been established beyond contradiction, by the fact that a few years ago a whale was driven on shore not far from Larnaca, in Cyprus, and those who got possession of it are said to have realized more than three hundred pounds sterling by the trying out of the oil. Again, during the winter of 1877 a whale came ashore below Tyre. An attempt was made to procure the skeleton for the museum of the Syrian Protestant College, but, owing to the interference of the Turkish authorities, it was frustrated. The Hebrew word dâg, it is true, means simply any great fish; but nothing is gained by resorting to such a solution of the difficulty. Our Lord calls it a whale, and I am contented with his translation; and whale it was, not a shark or lamia, as some critics maintain. In a word, the whole affair was miraculous, and, as such, is taken out of the category of difficulties. If a whale had never before been in the Mediterranean, God could bring one to the exact spot needed as easily as he brought the ram to the place where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac. He could also furnish the necessary capacity to accomplish the end intended. It is idle, and worse, cowardly, to withhold our faith in a Bible miracle until we can find or invent some way in which the thing might have happened without any great miracle after all.

Is there any gourd in this country of growth so rapid as to corroborate the statement that Jonah's grew up in a night?

Certainly not; but, without any of that anxiety about the how and the possible in miracles, we may remark that there is an economical propriety in selecting this vine rather than any other, and for several reasons. It is very commonly used for trailing over temporary arbors. It grows with extraordinary rapidity. In a few days after it has fairly began to run, the whole arbor is covered. It forms a shade quite impenetrable to the sun's rays even at noonday. It flourishes best in the very hottest part of summer. And, lastly, when injured or cut, it withers away with equal rapidity. In selecting the gourd, therefore, there is not only an adherence to



ARBOR COVERED WITH A GOURD.

verisimilitude, which is always becoming, but there is also an economy, if we may so speak, in the expenditure of miraculous agency. The question is not about power at all. The same God who caused the gourd to grow in a night could make a cedar do so likewise; but this would be a wide departure from the general method of miraculous interposition, which is to employ it no

farther than is necessary to secure the result required. When Lazarus was to be raised, for example, Martha must guide to the tomb; some must remove the stone from the cave's mouth, and others loose the risen Lazarus from his grave-clothes. So, when Jonah was to be sheltered from the burning sun, that which was best adapted to the purpose, and which grew with the greatest rapidity, was selected to make the shade.

Is there any reason to suppose that it was not a gourd, but some other plant; that of the castor-bean, for example, as many learned critics have concluded?

It would be impertinent to say, or imply, that there is no reason for this, or for any other opinion adopted by learned and impartial men, after careful examination; but their arguments do not for a moment disturb my settled conviction that it was a gourd. The cause of their mistake may probably be found in the fact that, in these Shemitic dialects, the word kŭr'ah, gourd, closely resembles, both in form and sound, khŭrwah, castor-bean, just as the kikion, gourd, of Jonah resembles the Egypto-Greek kiki, castor-bean, according to Dioscorides. These accidental resemblances may have led Jerome and others into the opinion that they were the same plant. But Orientals never dream of training a castor-oil plant over a booth, or planting it for a shade, and they would have but small respect for any one who did. It is in no way adapted for that purpose, while thousands of arbors are covered with various creepers of the general gourd family. As to ancient translations, the Septuagint gives colocynth, which is a general species of gourd; and the Vulgate, castor-bean. Augustin differed with Jerome about this vine, and even quarrelled over it, according to a bit of patristic scandal. Let us not imitate them; for, though I believe it was a gourd, I am quite willing that any one should adopt that opinion which he thinks best supported.

The brief history of Jonah has always appeared to me to be encumbered with a large share of obscurities. For example, who were those sailors? They were not Jews; were wholly unacquainted with the prophet, and yet they conversed with him without difficulty.

In all probability they were Phœnicians, and their language was

therefore so closely related to the Hebrew that an interpreter was not needed.

Where was Tarshish, to which port or country the ship belonged or was bound?

Scarcely any name in Biblical geography suggests more unanswered and unanswerable questions than this. The Arabs believe it was Tarsus, the birthplace of Paul, and their Bible naturally suggests this idea. In English, the name is variously written—Tarshish, Tarsis, and Tarsus. The Seventy do not translate it always alike, and the Vulgate is still more confused. When I first came to the East, I resided some time in Jaffa, and the friends with whom I became acquainted traded largely with Tarsus. Ships, loaded with soap and other articles, were constantly departing from "Joppa" for "Tarshish," as they appear to have done in the days of Jonah. I had then no doubt as to the identity of the places. Subsequent examination, however, has led me to modify this opinion. It is true that Palestine has always traded with Asia Minor through Tarsus; true, also, that from Tarsus to the Grecian islands the distance is not great, and the connection by trade is natural and uninterrupted to this day. It is not forced, therefore, to connect Tarsus and the Greek islands together, as is frequently done in the Bible. Doubtless the first trading voyages from Phœnicia northward were along the coast, and round the head of this sea by Tarsus, and thence westward to the islands. It was not until after long experience in coasting that mariners acquired courage and skill to strike out boldly into the shoreless ocean. It is doubtful whether they did this in the days of Jonah, although the pilots of Hiram's ships were celebrated, even in the times of David and Solomon. I am inclined to adopt the opinion that "ships of Tarshish," or Tarsis, early became a general name for large merchantships, just as we speak of an East Indiaman or a whaler. The name may have been derived, first of all, from Tarsus of Cilicia, and subsequently given to Tartessus, country or city, or both, in Spain, which was a colony, perhaps, from Tarsus. Arrian,[1] Diodorus,[2] and Strabo[3] all mention such a city, and I think it probable that Jonah meant to flee thither. Tarsus, nearly on the route to Nineveh from

[1] Alex. iii. 86. [2] Diod. Sic. v. 35. [3] Strab. iii. 147.

Palestine, would not have been selected by the rebellious prophet for his place of concealment. However this may be, we must give a very wide latitude to the expression "ships of Tarshish." They sailed everywhere—west, along all the shores of the Mediterranean, and out into the Atlantic; and south and east, through the Red Sea, along the African and Arabian coasts as far as India. From Asia Minor and from Spain they brought gold, silver, lead, tin, and iron; and from India and the East came spices, and ivory, and ebony, and apes, and peacocks, as we read in the accounts of the Jewish and Phœnician merchant navies. By the aid of this theory we can reconcile the Biblical statements as to the time occupied by these ships of Tarshish in their expeditions—once in three years. Those trading with the far East, or with Ireland or England, might require that length of time to complete their sales and purchases, and to return home.

How do you account for the very pious and becoming language used by these heathen sailors, and the humble and penitent deportment of the king of corrupt Nineveh?

There is nothing very strange in this to Orientals, or to one familiar with them. Such language is universal. No matter how profane, immoral, and even atheistical a man may be, yet will he, on all appropriate occasions, speak of God—the one God, our God—in phrases the most proper and pious. We are abashed and confounded in the presence of such holy talkers, and have not courage, or, rather, have too much reverence for sacred things to follow them in their glib and heartless verbiage. The fact is, I suppose, that Oriental nations, although they sank into various forms of idolatry, never lost the phraseology of the pure original theosophy. We are struck with this in all the Bible histories in which these people have occasion to speak of God and his attributes. The Canaanites could talk as devoutly as Abraham, and Nebuchadnezzar with as much propriety as Daniel. And the same is wonderfully true at the present day. A hard old Druse of Lebanon would edify a Payson or a Martyn. Indeed, there is nothing in which modern custom corresponds more completely with the ancient than in this pious talk. There is scarcely an expression of the kind we are considering which has not its perfect parallel in the daily living lan-

guage of the people around us. Place an Arab in the circumstances in which these old heathen are represented as acting and speaking, and his expressions will be so similar, even to the very words and peculiar idioms, as to suggest the idea that they have been learned from the Bible. And yet this cannot be, because the remark applies, in all its extent, to the Bedawin, in whose tribes there never has been a Bible, nor a man able to read it, had there been one.

In regard to the profound impression produced by the preaching of Jonah in Nineveh, we must suppose that he was attended by such credentials of his prophetic office and mission as commanded attention and belief. What these credentials were we do not know. Jonah "was a sign unto the Ninevites." Perhaps he carried with him, or there had preceded him, such well-authenticated proofs of his wonderful preservation in the whale's belly as deeply alarmed the Ninevites, on whose account, in an important and portentous sense, the miracle had been wrought. Nor is it difficult to discover how such reports might have been spread abroad. The sailors of the ship could testify that they threw Jonah overboard in a tempestuous sea; very likely they saw him swallowed by the great fish. They would, therefore, be immensely amazed to find him on shore, alive and well. Such a thing would now make a prodigious noise in the world, and the news of it would fly from city to city with incredible speed. There is no reason to doubt, therefore, that the story of the prophet had preceded him to Nineveh, and prepared the way for the extraordinary success of his preaching.

I must now leave you for the remainder of the day, and return to the city, in order to complete the preparations for our journey. In overhauling your baggage, I advise you to lay aside all articles not strictly necessary for daily use. Everything has to be carried on mules, will be roughly handled, and exposed to various accidents; and whatever can be spared from your impedimenta had better be forwarded to Jerusalem to await our arrival there some forty days hence.

April 4th. Evening.

I have been detained in the city longer than I anticipated, and yet have not completed our preparations. My cook once said to me, in excuse for a provoking delay, "This plenty patience coun-

try." The fact cannot be denied, and you will do well to "put on the garment of patience," according to the Arab proverb, for you will need it every day.

There has been no occasion for the use of it thus far. I have been roaming about these biârahs, looking at and into things generally. Our position is not only novel but picturesque, and extremely pleasant. Notwithstanding all I had heard and read about these gardens, I am surprised at their extent. From the roof of the house the eye wanders over a veritable wilderness of luxuriant vegetation, apparently without limits, and certainly very beautiful.

Jaffa is famed in modern times for her gardens and orchards of delicious fruit more than for anything else. They are quite extensive, flourishing, and profitable, but their very existence depends upon the fact that water to any amount can be procured in every garden, and at a moderate depth. The entire plain seems to cover a river of vast breadth, percolating through the sand en route to the sea. Hundreds of Persian water-wheels, working night and day, produce no sensible diminution, and this inexhaustible source of wealth underlies the whole territory of the Philistines down to Gaza at least, and probably much farther south, though wells have to be sunk to a great depth in many places to reach the water.

Have we any reason to believe that these Persian water-wheels were here in ancient days of Jewish history? I have been greatly interested in them, and they seem admirably adapted for the purpose intended.

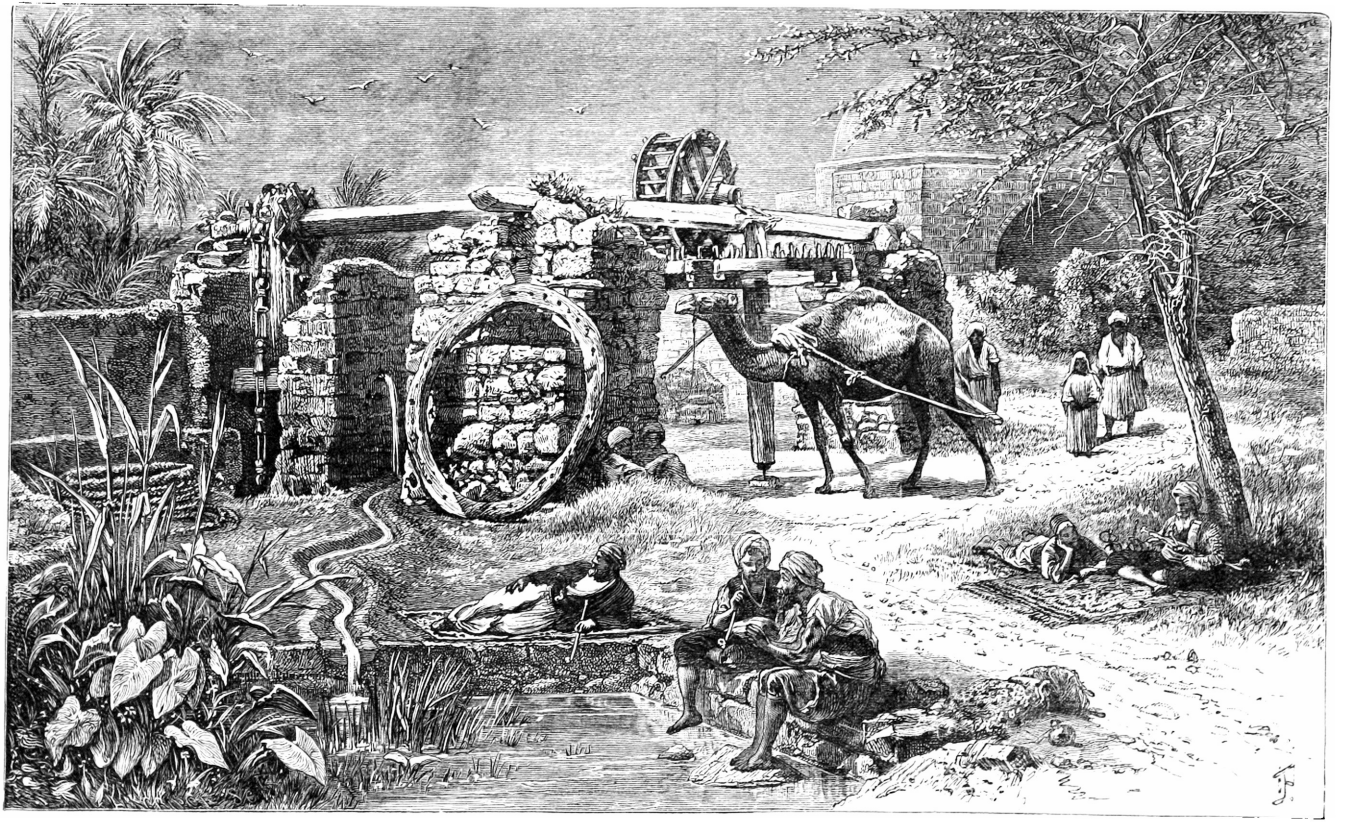
Simple in construction, cheap, quickly made, soon repaired, easily worked, they raise an immense quantity of water. Many efforts have been made to introduce pumps, but they always fail and get out of repair; and as there is no one able to mend them, they are thrown aside, and the gardener returns to his nâ'urah. The whole of this machinery is quickly enumerated and described. A clumsy cog-wheel, fitted to an upright post, is made to revolve horizontally by a mule attached to a sweep; this turns a similar one perpendicularly, placed at the end of a heavy beam, which has a large wide drum built into it, directly over the mouth of the well. Over this drum revolve two rough hawsers, or thick ropes, made of twigs and branches twisted together, and upon them

are fastened small jars or wooden buckets. One side descends while the other rises, carrying the small buckets with them; those descending empty, those ascending full, and as they pass over the top they discharge into a trough which conveys the water to the cistern. The length of these hawsers and the number of the buckets depend, of course, upon the depth of the well, for the buckets are fastened on the hawser about two feet apart. The depth of wells in Jaffa varies from ten to forty feet. If the mule or camel turns the wheel rapidly, which he rarely does, a bucket with about two gallons of water will be carried over the top of it and discharged into the trough every second; and it must be a good pump that will steadily do as much. The hawser is made of twigs, generally of myrtle, not merely because it is cheap and easily plaited by the gardener himself, but because its extreme roughness prevents it from slipping round on the wheel, as an ordinary rope would do, and thus fail to carry up the loaded buckets.

There are other kinds of water-wheels in this country. The shadûf, so conspicuous on the Nile, is nowhere to be seen in Palestine, but the well-sweep and bucket are used in many places; and I once saw an Egyptian working an apparatus much like the shadûf on the shore of the lake a little north of the city of Tiberias.

Another method is common in this land of Philistia, which I have also seen on the plains of Central Syria. A large buffalo-skin is so attached to cords that, when let down into the well, it opens and is instantly filled, and, being drawn up, it closes so as to retain the water. The rope by which it is hoisted to the top works over a wheel, and is drawn by oxen, mules, or camels, that walk directly from the well to the length of the rope, and then return, only to repeat the operation until a sufficient quantity of water is raised. This, also, is a very successful mode of drawing water.

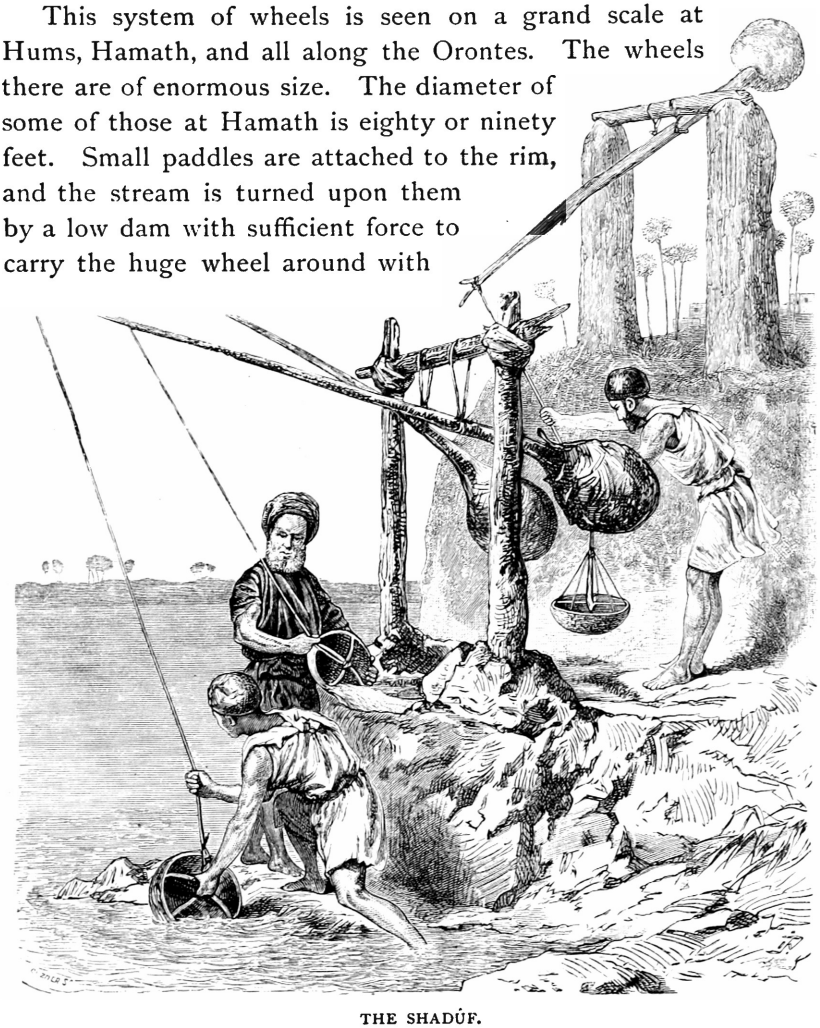
The wheel and bucket, of different sorts and sizes, are much used where the water is near the surface, and also along rapid rivers. For shallow wells merely a wheel is used, whose diameter equals the desired elevation of the water. The rim of this wheel is large, hollow, and divided into compartments answering the place of buckets. A hole near the top of each bucket allows it to fill, as that part of the rim, in revolving, dips under the water. This, of



NÀ'URAH, PERSIAN WATER-WHEEL.

course, will be discharged into the trough when the bucket begins to descend, and thus a constant succession of streams falls into the cistern. The wheel itself is turned by oxen, or mules, or camels.

This system of wheels is seen on a grand scale at Hums, Hamath, and all along the Orontes. The wheels there are of enormous size. The diameter of some of those at Hamath is eighty or ninety feet. Small paddles are attached to the rim, and the stream is turned upon them by a low dam with sufficient force to carry the huge wheel around with



THE SHADÚF.

all its load of ascending buckets. These immense wheels are driven by the river itself; and the water, carried up to the required height, is sufficient to irrigate the extensive gardens. There is, perhaps, no hydraulic machinery in use by which so much water is raised to so

great an elevation at so small an expense. Certainly I have seen none so picturesque or so musical. These wheels, with their enormous loads, slowly revolve on their groaning axles, all day and all night, each one singing a different tune, with every imaginable variation of tone, sobs, sighs, shrieks, and groans—loud, louder, loudest, down to the bottom of the gamut—a concert wholly unique and half infernal in the night, which, heard once, will never be forgotten.

To what does Moses refer in the eleventh chapter and tenth verse of Deuteronomy? "For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs."[1]

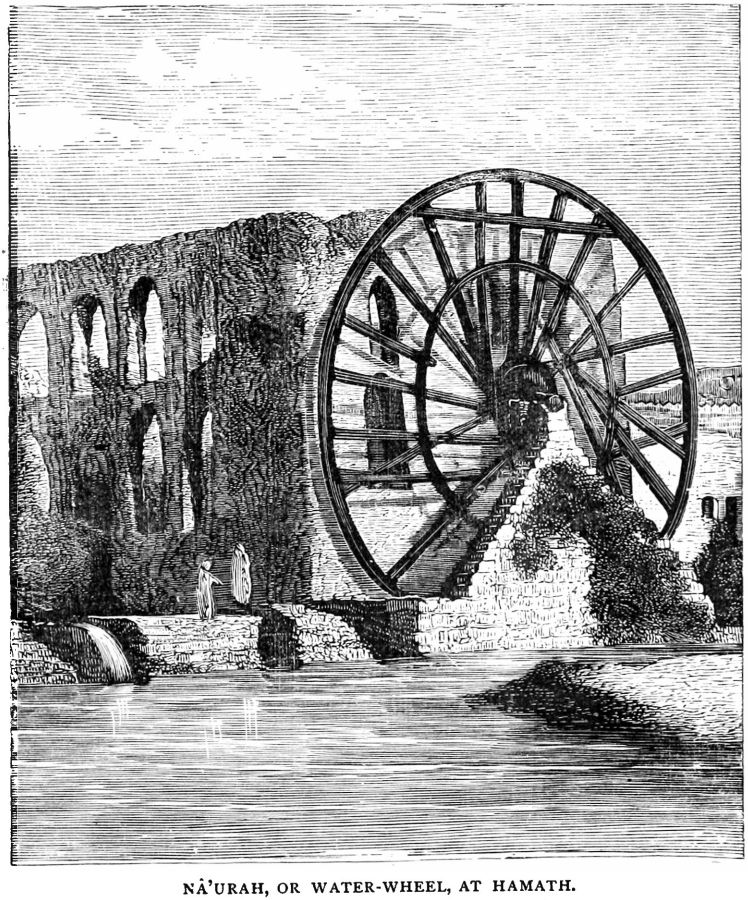
The reference, perhaps, is to the manner of conducting the water about from plant to plant, and from furrow to furrow, in irrigating a garden of herbs. I have often watched the gardener at this fatiguing and unhealthy work. When one place is sufficiently saturated, he pushes aside the soil between it and the next furrow with his foot, and thus continues to do until all are watered. He is thus sometimes knee-deep in mud, and many are the diseases generated by this slavish work.

Or the reference may be to certain kinds of hydraulic machines which were turned by the feet. I have seen small water-wheels thus worked, and it appeared to me to be very tedious and toilsome. If the whole country had to be irrigated by such a process, it would require a nation of slaves like the Hebrews, and taskmasters like the Egyptians, to make it succeed. Whatever may have been the meaning of Moses, the Hebrews, no doubt, had learned by bitter experience what it was to water with the foot, and this would add great force to the allusion, and render doubly precious the goodly land which drank of the rain of heaven, and required no such drudgery to make it fruitful.

The fruits of Jaffa are the same as those of Sidon, but with certain variations in their character. Sidon has the best bananas, Jaffa furnishes the best pomegranates. The oranges of Sidon are more juicy and of a richer flavor than those of Jaffa; but the latter are

[1] See illustration on page 14.

larger, hang on the trees much later, and will bear to be shipped to distant regions. They are, therefore, more valuable to the producer. It is here that you see in perfection fragrant blossoms encircling golden fruit. In March and April these Jaffa gardens are indeed enchanting. The air is overloaded with the mingled per-



NÂ'URAH, OR WATER-WHEEL, AT HAMATH.

fume of orange, lemon, apple, apricot, quince, plum, and china trees in blossom. The people then frequent the biârah, sit on mats beneath the grateful shade, sip coffee, smoke the nargileh, sing, converse, or sleep, as best suits their individual idiosyncrasies, till evening, when they slowly return to their homes in the city. To

us of the restless West this way of making kaif soon wearies by its slumberous monotony, but it is elysium to the Oriental.

Are these orchards remunerative in a pecuniary point of view?

I am informed that they yield ten per cent. on the capital invested, clear of all expense. Our friend Mr. Murad tells me that a biârah which costs 100,000 piastres will produce annually 15,000; but 5000 of this must be expended in irrigation, ploughing, planting, and manuring. This allows the proprietor 10,000 piastres, which is a fair profit on capital invested in agricultural pursuits.

April 5th.

I can hardly realize that I am in the land where the Patriarchs dwelt; and so many things, new and strange, solicit attention at every turn, that I feel bewildered, and know not with what to begin.

Naturally enough, and under such circumstances, the inquiry, "How best to observe?" is eminently appropriate. Many travellers pass rapidly through this country with eyes that see not and hearts that cannot understand. Such had better remain away, since they learn nothing worth knowing in return for weary days, sleepless nights, and general discomfort. One short rule will save you from such a result—be ever on the watch, and allow nothing novel or strange to pass unquestioned.

As to asking questions, I shall need neither rule nor prompter. Half a dozen are seeking a solution this very minute. Remember this is our first walk in the Land of Promise—a land of promises scarcely less interesting to me than were those given to the Father of the Faithful, when the Lord said unto him, "Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee."

To walk thus through the land is the exact purport of my visit, and I mean to make it mine from Dan to Beersheba before I leave it.

Do you expect to gain such an inheritance as this in a few months? Abraham himself never set foot on one-tenth of this territory, and Moses only got a bird's-eye view of it—not a bad one, though, if the day was as intensely clear as this. One seems to look quite to the bottom of heaven's profoundest azure, "where

the everlasting stars abide." Through such utter transparency did the Lord show unto Moses, from the top of Mount Abarim, "all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar."[1] Nor need there have been any miracle in the matter. Though a hundred and twenty years old, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."[2] Nor is it necessary to climb where Moses stood, for I can guide you to many a Pisgah on Hermon and Lebanon from whence the view is far more extensive.

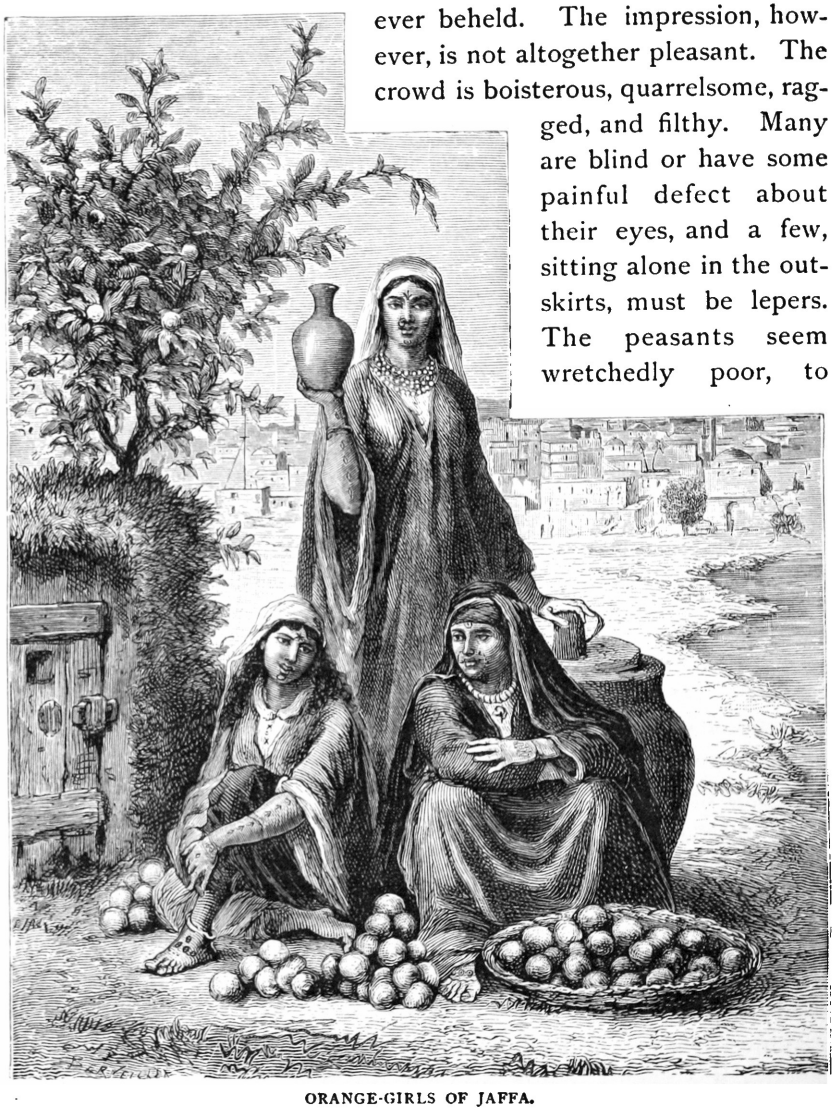
At present my attention is wholly occupied by things immediately around me. Before entering the city, let us stop and study this motley crowd of busy townsfolk, country peasants, and foreign pilgrims, strangely intermingled among camels, horses, mules, and belligerent donkeys—a very Babel of confusion, every one for himself, and each and all ambitious to make the loudest noise possible.

It is probably market-day, and you have before you a veritable Oriental fair. There is no room in the city for such a gathering, and it is, therefore, held here, in this large open space outside the entrance. You may well study it with attention, for you will meet with none of equal interest in all our rambles through the land. Lemons and oranges, pomegranates and quinces, apples and apricots, and all kinds of fruits and vegetables, in their season, which these extensive gardens produce, are here exposed for sale. The fellahin, also, from the villages bring their sheep and goats, their lambs and kids, their cows and calves, their milk and butter and cheese, their poultry and eggs, their figs and olives, and every other kind of fruit, fresh or dry, which they possess; in baskets or round trays or small earthen jugs, in jars or large skin-bottles, on camels or mules, or horse or donkey, on the heads of men or boys, women or girls, are they brought and set down here to be sold. With the proceeds in hand they enter the city and shop, spending their gains, and carrying home with them in return every conceivable article that domestic necessity requires or fancy suggests for personal adornment.

It is indeed a novel and picturesque scene, unlike anything I

[1] Deut. xxxiv. 1–3. [2] Deut. xxxiv. 7.

ever beheld. The impression, however, is not altogether pleasant. The crowd is boisterous, quarrelsome, ragged, and filthy. Many are blind or have some painful defect about their eyes, and a few, sitting alone in the outskirts, must be lepers. The peasants seem wretchedly poor, to



ORANGE-GIRLS OF JAFFA.

judge from their rags and squalid appearance. The sight reminds one of Dorcas, and the widows exhibiting to Peter the coats and garments which that benevolent lady had made. It is much to be desired that she might rise again from the dead, at least in spirit, for a dozen Dorcas societies are needed in Jaffa at the present time.

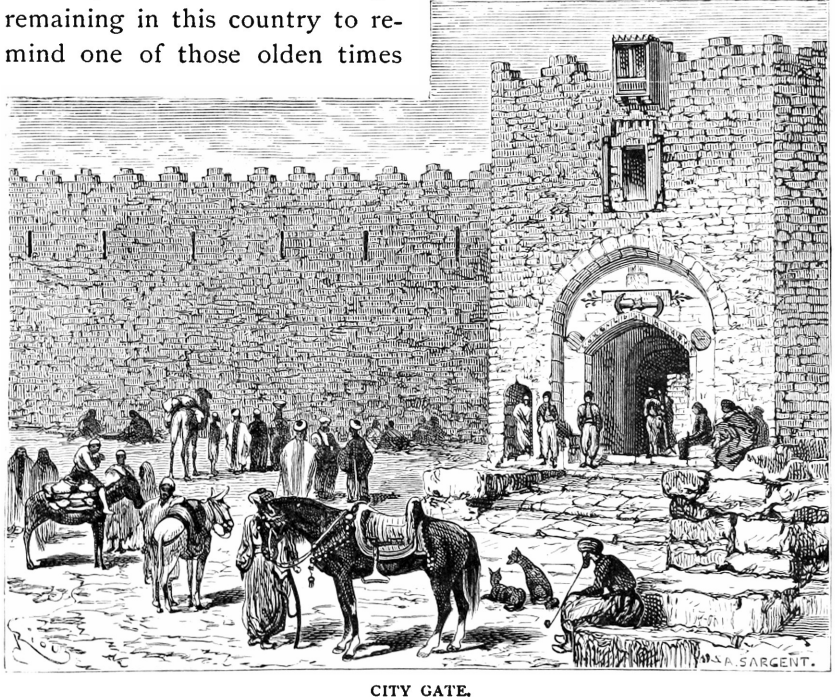
The case is not as bad as it looks. Many of these peasants are in comfortable circumstances, and pinching poverty and absolute want are rare. We can spare no more time for this spectacle, however, entertaining as it may be to you. Let us enter the city. I wish to show you the most striking architectural object in Jaffa. This "void place" in front of what was formerly Jaffa's only gate was then the great place of concourse, especially in the afternoon and evening.

Stop a moment. A city gate is a novelty to me, and I must examine in detail a structure so often mentioned in the Bible.

What is there in a mere city gate to attract attention?

Very little, perhaps, to one who has passed in and out daily for so many years; but many Biblical incidents connect themselves with gates. Almost every city of ancient celebrity had them, and they were places of great importance.

They were, indeed; and, although customs have changed in this respect, there is still enough remaining in this country to remind one of those olden times



CITY GATE.

when nearly every public transaction took place at or near the city gates. Jaffa has burst her shell by the force of sudden expansion, and will soon have neither wall nor gates; but several other cities in Syria and Palestine are still protected by these venerable safeguards.

And thus it was in ancient days. I remember that righteous Lot, intent on deeds of hospitality, sat in the gate of Sodom towards the close of day, somewhat as these Arabs are now seated, I suppose, and thereby he obtained the privilege of entertaining unawares those angels who saved him from the destruction of that wicked city.[1] It was at the gate of Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, that Abraham completed the contract for the cave of Machpelah, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of the city.[2] It was at the same place that Hamor and Shechem negotiated that fatal treaty with all that went in at the gate of the city,[3] which gave opportunity to those fierce and treacherous brethren, Simeon and Levi, with instruments of cruelty to work out their revenge. "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel."[4]

Since this very unpretending entrance to Jaffa is leading into a long discussion, let us prepare ourselves a seat, as Job did when he went out to the gate,[5] and then we can talk at our leisure, and our ease as well. You observe that the gate-way is vaulted, shady, and cool. This is one reason why people delight to assemble about it. Again, the curious and vain resort thither to see and be seen. Some go to meet their associates; others, to watch for returning friends, or to accompany those about to depart; while many gather there to hear the news, or to engage in trade and traffic. You remember the commandment of Moses, "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates."[6] The phrase, "in all thy gates," occurs four times in that sixteenth chapter alone, and elsewhere so often as to imply that it was a proverbial expression, current among the Hebrew people in all ages. There is no equivalent in our language, for the simple reason that there never has been a state of society among us that could suggest it. But this is just one of

[1] Gen. xix. 1; Heb. xiii. 2. [2] Gen. xxiii. 17, 18. [3] Gen. xxxiv. 20, 24.
[4] Gen. xlix. 5, 7. [5] Job xxix. 7. [6] Deut. xvi. 18.

those incidental allusions to the social condition of the people that rendered gates and bars among the first essentials of existence, which we know, from historic sources, prevailed all over this land. Every considerable town was walled, and had gates, which were always shut at night. Within these gates everything of value that could be stolen had to be brought: herds and flocks, camels and servants—the entire community, in fact, with all they possessed. Hence the reasonableness of the oft-repeated command, that all within thy gates, including the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, should participate in the great feasts and in the blessed rest of the Sabbath—an enactment as beautiful as it is humane.

I have often been reminded of this phrase, and that which suggested it, when in Sidon, Tyre, Acre, and other walled towns of this country. As the sun goes down, you see along every converging lane and pathway men and women, flocks and herds, all hastening towards the city gates; for such is the state of insecurity, even at the present day, that nothing left outside and unguarded is safe from robbers that are ever prowling around the country. Again, each considerable hâret, or ward, of a city had separate gates for itself, by which the inhabitants were shut in from every other part—an ancient custom, still retained in Damascus and other large and turbulent cities. Another very ancient custom will further illustrate the feeling of insecurity that pervades all Oriental society. Every palace and important house has an external court, with its gate; and there is always a particular servant, called el bowâb, or porter, whose special duty it is to watch the gate and answer the calls at its portal. To this, as you know, there are many allusions in Biblical narratives; and it is always both pleasant and profitable to meet with such illustrations in the manners and customs of the present day.

In 1834 I resided for several months in this city, and, to pass away the time, frequently came out, in the afternoon, "to the gate through the city, and prepared my seat in the street." There the governor, the kâdy, and the elders of the people assembled daily, "in a void place," and held an extemporaneous divân, at which affairs of every kind were discussed and settled with the least possible ceremony. But recently from America, I was greatly amused

with this novel open-air court, conducted amidst the din, confusion, and uproar of a thronged gate-way — men, women, and children jostling each other; horses prancing, camels growling, donkeys braying, as they passed in and out of the gate; but nothing could interrupt the proceedings, or disturb the judicial gravity of the court. The whole scene, with all its surroundings, was wholly Oriental, and withal had about it an air of remote antiquity, which rendered it doubly interesting. Throughout sacred history, poetry, and prophecy, the gate is celebrated for and connected with numberless interesting incidents and allusions. It would require a little volume to notice and explain them all; but here we have the thing itself, with "a void place in the entrance of the gate,"[1] like that where Boaz made the elders of Bethlehem sit while he contracted for Ruth, the fair Moabitess;[2] where Eli sat trembling for the ark of God, and fell back and broke his neck when tidings of its capture came.[3] And here are the two doors of the gate, and the posts, and the bars, and the bolts, like those of Gaza, which Samson tore from their sockets, and on his shoulders carried up to the top of a hill that is before Hebron.[4] And over this gate is a chamber, like that to which David went and wept; "and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"[5]

It is not difficult to comprehend why public proclamations were made in the gates, and why prophets so often pronounced their messages there. We read of the gates of righteousness,[6] because justice and judgment were there decreed and executed;[7] and so, likewise, the prophets denounced the oppression of the poor in the gate, where corrupt judges sold justice to the highest bidder. "They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right;" and to this refers the exhortation, "Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate."[8]

From the repeated allusions in the Proverbs to religious discussions in the streets, in the chief places of concourse, in the open-

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 10. [2] Ruth iv. 1, 2. [3] 1 Sam. iv. 18.
[4] Judges xvi. 3. [5] 2 Sam. xviii. 33. [6] Psa. cxviii. 19.
[7] Deut. xxi. 18–21; xxii. 23, 24. [8] Amos v. 12, 15.

ings of the gates, in the top of the high places, and the like, we learn that it was customary, in Solomon's day, to hold such conversations and discourses in the open air, and in a very public manner. The same was true in classic Greece and Rome. In the East the habits of the people, in this respect, remain unchanged, especially in districts remote from foreign influence. There is commonly some locality in or about villages and small towns where the people assemble to discuss every topic of general interest, be it social or civil, educational or religious. Where there are no gates, the street, or the open space in the centre of the hamlet, answers the purpose. Solomon, therefore, does not violate even modern Oriental custom when he represents Wisdom crying aloud and exhorting in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates, or in the street itself.[1]

Again, gates were fortified in the strongest possible manner. In them the people trusted for safety, and they naturally became the synonyme for strength and power. "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise."[2] Hence the prophets delighted to personify them. In times of calamity they languish and lament, mourn and howl; they sing, shout, and rejoice in prosperity. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion; and David exclaims, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."[3] And remembering that all, both great and small, must enter by them, it is not far-fetched or unnatural to speak of the gates of death. And who has not felt the solemn admonition, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," and trembled lest he should be swept along by the thoughtless multitude through the wide gate that leadeth to destruction? I have seen these strait gates and narrow ways, with here and there a traveller. They are in retired corners, and must be sought for, and are opened only to those who knock; and when the sun goes down and the night comes on, they are shut and locked. It is then too late.[4]

I see we shall never get into the city, if we sit here conversing about gates until the subject is exhausted; but allow me to remark,

[1] Prov. i. 20, 21; viii. 3; ix. 3.
[2] Isa. lx. 18.
[3] Psa. xxiv. 7.
[4] Matt. vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24, 25.

as we enter, that gates have the same kind of names now as in ancient times, generally derived from some accidental circumstance connected with them. One is Bab es Seraih, because the governor's palace is near it. One is Bab el Bahr, because it leads to the sea. That near which the tanners carry on their business is Bab ed Dubbâgâ. And thus, too, the streets and different quarters of the city derive their names, for those who follow the same trade congregate in the same street; and one is saddlers', the next blacksmiths' street, and so on to the end of the list.

Here is the fountain which I promised to show you. With its hexagonal cupola and surrounding courts, it is the most picturesque edifice in the city. Jaffa is singularly destitute of architectural adornment; and this is the only building having the slightest claims to even Saracenic beauty.

It is really quite striking, not to say peculiar, and crowded with admirable specimens of Arab countenances and costumes — the counterpart, in miniature, of the scene and the actors we have just been contemplating outside the gate.

I will now leave you to visit, during the day, other places of interest. Salîm will be your guide. He is perfectly familiar with all the sites and scenes you will want to explore. In the evening I shall expect to get a report of your rambles and impressions.

April 5th. Evening.

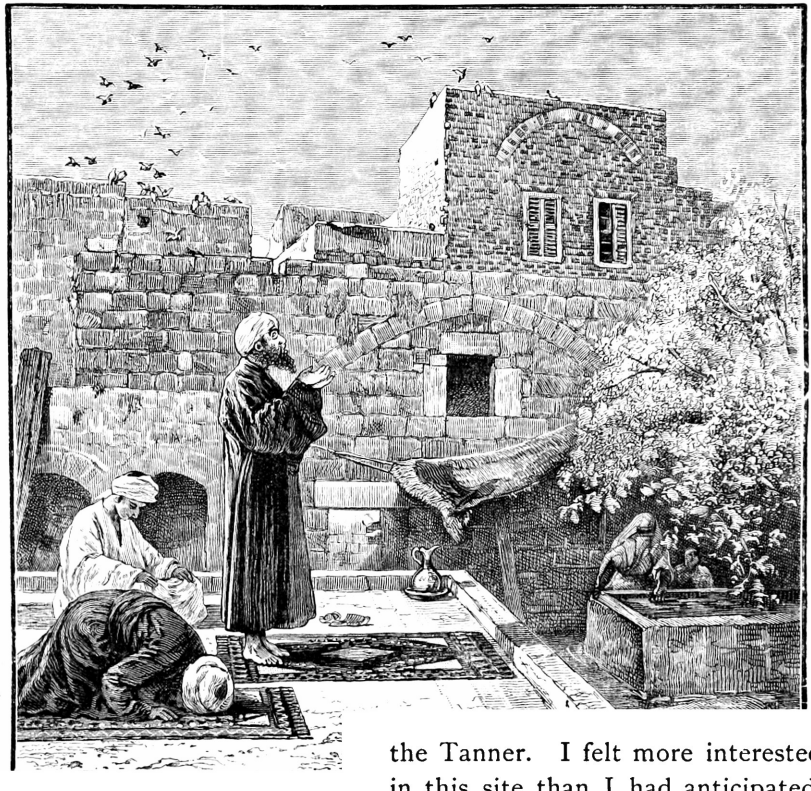
I hope your wanderings through the city to-day have been successful and pleasant.

My report will be brief—not, however, from lack of interest in the places which we visited. I directed Salîm to take me to the highest part of Jaffa, that I might get a general view of the place and its immediate surroundings. Nearly the entire city occupies the north and north-west sides of the small cape on which it stands, the houses rising tier above tier from the very verge of the sea. The declivity is so precipitous that the flat roofs of the lower tier of houses form the terrace in front of those above, and the ascent and descent along the narrow streets is one continual stair-way. The prospect from our out-look was extensive and interesting: southward, beyond the quarantine grounds, over the rolling plain of



SARACENIC FOUNTAIN AT JAFFA.

Philistia; eastward, over the gardens and across the plain of Sharon to the distant hills of Judæa; and northward, following the line of the coast, the eye caught faintly the dim outline of well-wooded Carmel; while westward the great and wide sea rolled far away to the distant horizon. From this stand-point we descended to the extreme north-west corner of the city, to visit the house of Simon



HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER.

the Tanner. I felt more interested in this site than I had anticipated. The waves thundering against the rocks at its base gave most emphatic testimony that it "is by the sea-side." Nobody, of course, pretends that the existing house, with its well and tanner's slab, is the identical one upon whose roof Peter went "to pray about the sixth hour;" and there falling into a trance, saw heaven open, and heard that voice thrice repeated which prepared him to preach the Gospel of salvation to the

heathen world.[1] We Gentiles should regard this vision of Peter with special interest; and I see no reason why tradition may not have preserved the knowledge of the site where the miracle occurred. Both Christians and Moslems reverence the place, and several of the latter were performing their mid-day prayers on an adjoining terrace while we were there.

The tradition is quite ancient, and the site has at least this much in its favor—it is in Jaffa, and "by the sea-side," or, rather, just above it; and, from the nature of the locality, it is highly probable that the home of the Tanner was in that immediate vicinity. Many years ago, when I first visited the spot, there were only a few shattered arches above the basement vault, and the whole surroundings were extremely filthy and offensive.

If Simon lived near his business, his house was probably on the shore south of the city, where the tanneries now are located, and most likely were in Peter's day. These manufacturing establishments are generally removed to a distance beyond the walls, and with good reason; for they are extremely offensive, as well as prejudicial to health. But there is no reason to suppose that Simon's dwelling-house was near his tannery, and it may have occupied the identical site now assigned to it.

We visited the tanneries, and saw how the red and yellow leather of Jaffa is manufactured, after which we spent an hour at a large pottery; and I was delighted to find the whole complete, and in full operation, according to the Biblical description. There was the potter sitting at his frame, and turning the wheel with his foot. Or, as the idea is expanded in the Apocrypha: "So doth the potter, sitting at his work and turning the wheel about with his feet: he fashioneth the clay with his arm."[2] The potter had a heap of the prepared clay near him, and a pot of water by his side. Taking a lump in his hand, he placed it on the top of the wheel, which revolves horizontally, and smoothed it into a low cone, like the upper end of a sugar-loaf; then, thrusting his thumb into the top of it, he opened a hole down through the centre, and this he constantly widened by pressing the edges of the revolving cone between his hands. As it enlarged and became thinner, he gave it

[1] Acts x. 9–15.

[2] Ecc. xxxviii. 29, 30.

whatever shape he pleased with the utmost ease and expedition. This, I suppose, is the exact point of those Biblical comparisons between the human and the Divine Potter: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house



THE POTTER AND WHEEL.

of Israel."[1] The same idea is found in many passages. When Jeremiah was watching the potter, the vessel was marred in his hand; and "so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it."[2] I had to wait a long time for that, but it happened at last. From some defect in the clay, or be-

[1] Jer. xviii. 6.

[2] Jer. xviii. 4.

cause he had taken too little, the potter suddenly changed his mind, crushed his growing jar instantly into a shapeless mass of mud, and, beginning anew, fashioned it into a totally different vessel. This idea, also, Paul has expounded, and employed in the ninth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, to soften some of those things which Peter says are hard to be understood: "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"[1] Certainly he has, and I saw him do it; but I did not see thereby much farther into the great mystery which the apostle was illustrating. That, I fear, will ever remain among the hard things "which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest unto their own destruction."[2]

It is evident, from numerous expressions in the Bible, that the potter's vessel was the synonyme of utter fragility; and to say, as David does, that Zion's King would dash his enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel, was to threaten them with ruinous and remediless destruction.[3] Is this true of all native pottery?

We who are accustomed to strong stone-ware of considerable value can scarcely appreciate some of these Biblical references; but for this country they are still as appropriate and forcible as ever. Arab jars are so thin and frail that they are literally dashed to shivers by the slightest stroke. Water-jars are often broken by merely putting them down upon the floor; and the servant frequently returns from the fountain empty-handed, having had all his jars smashed to atoms by some irregular behavior of the donkey. The coarse pottery of this country is so cheap that even poor people throw it aside in contempt, or dash it to pieces on the slightest occasion, as do the Metâwileh, for example, when one of another sect has made use of it. The threatening to which allusion has been made may have included this further idea of worthlessness, or even of defilement, implying that the wicked would be broken and thrown away as useless and unclean.

The Metâwileh, I suppose, borrowed the custom of breaking defiled vessels from the Jews, who were commanded to break all

[1] Rom. ix. 20, 21. [2] 2 Pet. iii. 16. [3] Psa. ii. 9.

earthen vessels into which any unclean thing had fallen, as we read in Lev. xi. 33, and elsewhere.

The Jews may be the nearest source of the custom; and the Metâwileh bear a singular resemblance to them, both in features and manners, and they doubtless came originally from the same part of the world. But many Oriental customs are older than Moses himself, and this may have been one of them. It is very interesting, however, to learn from this ordinance of Moses that the same kind of coarse and cheap earthen-ware that our servants heedlessly dash in pieces must have been used in much the same way in this land over three thousand years ago; for if the "earthen vessel" had been of much value, Moses would not have thus commanded its destruction, since it would have been impossible to enforce the order.

To what does Isaiah allude in the fourteenth verse of the thirtieth chapter, where he says, "He shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit?"

Your inquiry refers, I suppose, to the "sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit." It is very common to find at the spring or the pit pieces of broken jars, to be used as ladles, either to drink from or to fill with; and bits of fractured jars are preserved for this purpose. If you take your stand near any of the public ovens here in Jaffa in the evening, you will see the children of the poor coming with sherds of pottery in their hands, into which the baker pours a small quantity of hot embers and a few coals with which to warm up their evening meal. Isaiah's vessels, however, were to be broken into such small bits that there would not be a sherd of sufficient size to carry away a few embers from the hearth, nor to take water out of the pit. These comparisons are exceedingly expressive where the actions referred to are of constant occurrence, as they are throughout this country at the present day.

People in the East have no proper hearths, in our sense of the word, nor have they any of those pleasant associations and memories of home which our word hearth suggests. Indeed, they have

no equivalents, either in fact or phrase, for our "hearth and home" —two things closely connected and mutually dependent; for where there is no fireside nor hearth-stone, it will be scarcely possible to realize the full meaning of "Home, sweet home," as sung by millions in the world, whose fondest memories in after-life cluster around the family fireside of their childhood's days.

Sunday, April 6th.

In our conversation yesterday morning, you remarked that a traveller who wanders hastily over this country, simply to see its mountains and plains, its rivers and lakes, or merely to visit its sacred sites and historic scenes, fails to obtain the special advantages which such a tour ought to confer. To what, in particular, did you allude?

To the grand fact that Palestine is the birthplace and true home of the Bible, from whence is derived the religious language which we employ every day, in all our acts of acceptable worship. Here was its origin and development, and here are found its best illustrations.

I am not sure that I understand at once the full import of this comprehensive proposition.

Probably not, and yet I believe it to be one of supreme importance; and we may well devote part of this quiet Sabbath morning to the consideration of it.

This is all the more appropriate, since we are to start on our journey to-morrow. The subject is rather new, and a more definite acquaintance with it is necessary, if it is to be of any practical advantage to me in our travels through the country.

It will not be necessary to enter into any long discussion, historical or critical, to show how, and to what extent, our spiritual vocabulary has been derived from Palestine. Instead of this, we will select a few examples, taken from the poetry of the Bible, which, if I mistake not, will better answer the purpose.

That our religious language has been largely enriched from this poetic source is too obvious to need either proof or illustration. The Church, the universal Christian Church, has, in fact, transferred the entire Psalter bodily into her bosom; and with-

out it her children would not know how to conduct the devotions either of the closet, the family altar, or the public worship of the sanctuary. But this of itself would not establish our proposition. It must be further shown that this poetic dialect is essentially Palestinian. This is the exact point to be made and illustrated. The elements of poetry, the phenomena upon which its existence and culture depend, are not, of course, confined to this country. The material out of which it is woven exists in all lands; and for certain varieties of poetry, it may be found elsewhere in higher perfection than here. But what we attempt to show is that those phenomena, both natural and moral, which inspire spiritual poetry, are more numerous, beautiful, and suggestive in Palestine than elsewhere; and further, that they are concentrated in this very small territory. Palestine contains within itself specimens—hand-specimens, if you choose—of all which elsewhere lies scattered and dispersed over regions widely separated. Here all are grouped together as in a cabinet. Palestine is the true birthplace of the sacred psalm, the devout hymn; and for this purpose we believe the Divine Author of our religious life and language made special provision when creating, furnishing, and adorning this home of the Bible. God made both the Holy Land and the Sacred Poet, the one for the other. Both were necessary. Neither could realize the divine intention alone. They must be brought together, and act and react upon each other. Without this grand Palestinian orchestra, built by the Creator, no performer, however gifted, could have called forth the heavenly harmonies that here lie slumbering in the recesses of Nature's vast organ. But this external and physical machinery was not enough. It needed, also, and it was actually associated with, an endless array of moral influences and historic incidents of transcendent interest. In no other country have these been so numerous, so impressive, or so admirably adapted to the work of the sacred poet. Nowhere else have the alternations in human experience been so extreme and violent, from the utmost prosperity and the highest material happiness to the deepest abyss of poverty and wretchedness. Every chord in the human harp has here been struck in turn by the great Performer, now evoking sweetest harmony, now

crashing down its thousand strings in harshest discord. There is not an emotion, desire, fear, or hope possible to man's heart but has here been awakened and expressed. In this field there is nothing left for him "that cometh after the king" to know or experiment upon. Between these wide extremes, and all along the vast domain that lies within them, there can be no new regions to explore and possess, no untrodden height to which the poet can soar, no depths unfathomable in which to sink, no unknown joy to gladden, no untasted cup of sorrow to drain. The entire material out of which poets build their lofty verse has been gathered up and appropriated.

If this be so, how comes it that Palestine has never produced any great poet or grand epic?

The answer is that Biblical poets had a different and far higher mission than Homer or Virgil, Milton or Shakspeare, or any other name among the sons of song. They were commissioned and inspired to reveal to man the thoughts of God, to be his interpreters and messengers to a benighted world. On this high plane they stand unrivalled and alone, have no peers and no parallels. The specific aim of this inquiry, however, is not to establish the superiority of Hebrew poets or poetry, but to notice in what ways and to what extent our religious vocabulary has been enriched from this poetic source. For this purpose we may begin at the beginning, that is, with the very first Psalm, as well as anywhere else. A very simple process of analysis and comment will show that, in this sacred lyric, not only the illustrative comparisons, metaphors, and figures — the entire ornamental drapery and costume — are specifically Palestinian, but that the very thoughts themselves were suggested by things and conditions in this land. Take the first verse, and analyze it with this idea in view. To walk in the counsel of a person, to stand in the way, to sit in the seat, are forms of expression so familiar that one can scarcely realize the fact that he is not using words and phrases in their original prosaic sense; and yet they are, one and all, employed in this verse figuratively — transferred, by easy and obvious analogy, from things natural to those which are moral and spiritual. Nor is this the whole truth in the case. There is a distinct Palestinian

air about these and such-like analogical transferences. It may be difficult to put this fact into verbal expression sufficiently definite and tangible to enable one not familiar with this country to appreciate it, yet it is none the less real. The author of this first Psalm—no matter who he was, or when he wrote—must have been an inhabitant of this country. The figures, phrases, and comparisons would not have occurred to one residing in climes essentially different from this—in a country, for example, cold and stormy, with ways wet and muddy, used merely to pass from one place to another. Along such uncomfortable paths men do not saunter in converse and counsel; neither do they there stand idly plotting mischief; nor are seats placed there for the accommodation of scorners, or anybody else. One may wander for hours, even in ornamental parks, in such lands, without finding so much as a stone upon which to sit and rest. Very different is the case and the custom in such mild and seductive climates as this of Palestine. Here people pass a great portion of their time in the open air. They ramble at leisure along their pleasant and picturesque paths, stand in groups under cool shade-trees planted by the way-side, and there prepare they their seats, and pass away the time in mirth or mischief. Now, no poet of frigid Siberia, for example, or in the burning desert of Sahara, could or would have written the first verse of the first Psalm. Neither the thoughts nor the figures would have occurred to him. Nor, on the other hand, could one born and bred on the banks of the Mississippi have composed the third verse: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither." In such regions the greatest trouble and toil of the inhabitants is to cut down, burn, and destroy the trees; and no one would think of comparing the man that was blessed to one of these formidable giants of the forest. Again, this tree of the Psalm was planted, and by the rivers, or, rather, by the canals made for irrigation—all very appropriate to this country, but not to lands overshadowed by primeval woods, or where the chief anxiety is to get safely rid of a superabundance of water. In such regions trees grow without being planted, anywhere and everywhere, quite as well as "by the rivers of water." Then this was

a fruit-tree—an incident eminently natural here, where, as the Arab proverb tells us, "Many trees are planted, but only that is preserved which bears fruit." Few things in this country struck me more forcibly, when I first came to it, than this high estimate of trees, founded simply upon their fruit. The reason for this is obvious enough. A large part of the daily food of the people consists of various kinds of fruit which these planted trees produce; in many parts of the East it is their chief dependence. No explanation is needed of the additional fact mentioned by the poet, that the leaf of a tree thus planted by the water-courses would not wither, or of the implied fact that, in this climate, the case would be very different with trees standing in the parched deserts of southern Palestine.

Finally, no one at all acquainted with Palestine can read the fourth verse of the Psalm without having instantly presented to his imagination the summer threshing-floor, in the open air, upon some exposed hill-top, with the vehement wind catching up in its wings the useless chaff, and whisking it away among the ragged rocks. This doom is in vivid contrast to the green tree by the water-channels, with fadeless leaf, and branches bending beneath their burden of delicious fruit.

We may dwell for a moment on the ever-recurring use of the word fruit. Whatever results from a person's course of conduct, whether good or bad, is said to be the fruit of it. The transfer from the natural to the moral and the spiritual idea is made without the least conscious effort. The Great Teacher, therefore, did not need to explain his language when he said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits: Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."[1] Or again to his disciples, "Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."[2] And so the apostle, writing to the Galatians that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," and all the other spiritual graces, did not pause to explain, neither need we.[3]

[1] Matt. vii. 16–20. [2] John xv. 8. [3] Gal. v. 22.

Something more, however, may be said about the chaff chased by the wind—"driven with the whirlwind out of the floor," as Hosea has it. Chaff is the metaphorical symbol of the ungodly and their doom. John the Baptist expands the allusion by mentioning the fan by which the floor was purged, the chaff separated from the wheat, and then burned up with unquenchable fire. In purging the floor the following results occur: as the mixed contents are tossed up to the wind, the wheat falls nearest the winnowers, the tibn, or ground-up straw, next; and the light dust and useless chaff are carried farther off—quite outside the floor, if the wind be strong. This useless chaff is often burned on the spot, not merely because it is of no use, but also because there are mingled with it the seeds of tares and noxious weeds, which would be dispersed over the fields by the wind, or carried thither by the first autumn rains. It is not merely valueless, but positively mischievous; and so are the ungodly, who shall perish like the chaff.

We have not yet exhausted the contributions to our religious language which this short Psalm has made. The two last verses introduce us to an Oriental court, with the litigants standing before the judge, just as they do still; and the resultant condition and behavior of the good and the evil are perfectly natural.

To point out and explain the numberless contributions to our spiritual language and religious nomenclature, whose natural basis is found in Palestine, would require a volume, and this might well be written, for herein consists the chief interest of the Holy Land in our day, and its abiding importance to the Christian world.

II.

JAFFA TO CÆSAREA.

Departure for er Râs.—Foreign Residences and Schools in the Suburbs.—Contemplated Railroad and Harbor.—Modern Fruit compared with Biblical.—Sarona, the German Colony.—Unhealthiness of the Plain.—Castle of Mirabel.—River 'Aujeh, the possible Boundary between Ephraim and Manasseh.—Buffaloes and Papyrus.—Er Râs, Site of Antipatris.—Native Traditions concerning Napoleon Bonaparte.—Jiljûlieh, Site of Gilgal.—Kefr Sâba, Traditional Site of Antipatris.—Tent Life.—Mosaic Law respecting Pledged Raiment.—Route from Kefr Sâba to Cæsarea.—Kilkîlieh.—Hableh.—River Kânah.—Boundary between Ephraim and Manasseh.—River Fâlik.—Lot of Ephraim and Manasseh.—The Hebrew Y'ar and the Arabic W'ar.—Doom of the Gibeonites.—Marshy Watercourses.—Bethar.—Bâkah.—Jett, possible Gath-rimmon.—Oak Glades.—Camp at Tawahîn ez Zerka, near Cæsarea.—Sindiâneh.—Death of Absalom in the Wood of Ephraim.—Robber's Grave.—Fog at Early Morning.—El Kŭsr, Roman Theatre.—Aqueducts across the Marsh of Ez Zoar.—Ancient Quarries of Cæsarea.—Ride to Dor.—Seaboard of Syria.—Athlît.—Dor and her Towns.—Harbor of Cæsarea.—Cornelius the Centurion.—Peter's Mission.—Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles.—Ruins of Cæsarea.—Revolt and Massacre of the Jews.—Destruction of Cæsarea.—Aqueducts.—Mill-dam and Mills of Ez Zerka.—The Crocodile River.

April 7th.

In accordance with the route adopted, our first ride is northward towards Cæsarea and Dor.

Because otherwise the district between Jaffa and the south end of Carmel would not be visited at all, since it lies quite outside of our line of future travel.

I am more than content, for that entire region is terra incognita to me.

We may leave Salîm and the head muleteer, Abd Allah, in the midst of the general confusion and wrangle over the distribution of the loads, which inevitably occurs when first starting on such a journey as we are about to undertake. They will go direct to Kefr Sâba, where we are to spend the night. We have a long detour to make, and I hope we shall find the tents pitched and dinner awaiting when we reach our camp in the evening.

For what special purpose is this detour?

To obtain a general view of the northern part of the plain of Sharon, and to visit the fountain-head of the river 'Aujeh at er Râs, which has recently become a competitor with Kefr Sâba for the honor of being the site of Antipatris.

Here, on our right, is a suburb evidently modern, and the houses have a familiar appearance, not unlike those in our own land.

They are foreign, and the people who inhabit them are also foreign, and connected mostly with the German colony through which we shall pass in about an hour's time. This nearest and most conspicuous house is the residence of our present consular representative, Mr. Hardegg; and near it is the girls' school, and the home of Mrs. Hay and her invalid sister, Miss Baldwin, who conduct it. For similar benevolent purposes, that large and prominent edifice on the elevated ridge east of the city has been erected by Miss Arnott, an energetic and devoted lady from Scotland. May their self-denying work be crowned with abundant success.

Where is to be the terminus of the much-talked-of railroad to Jerusalem?

You noticed a large building on our right, before we passed this suburb; that is to be the first station, and it is the only part of the enterprise that has hitherto been achieved.

Or ever will be, I suppose. I cannot associate Joppa and the Holy City with a modern railway, even in imagination.

It would be unwise to pronounce almost any projected enterprise impossible in these days. And since there are no great engineering obstacles to overcome between Jaffa and Jerusalem, a railroad could soon be built, were there any adequate demand for it, or travel and traffic to support it. When I was here a few years ago, there was some talk of excavating a harbor along the low ground extending into the gardens eastward from that solitary station-house. It could be made, no doubt; and when the great Hebrew capitalists of the world purchase Palestine from the Sultan, and restore it to the Jews, it very likely will be.

If not till then, the prospect is dim and distant enough.

You need not be too confident even of that. Some such project is persistently kept before the public by letters, essays, pamphlets,

and lectures, premillennial and others. And it is a fact not to be ignored, that many intelligent people, both in Europe and America, are now greatly interested in this subject, and in this country with direct reference to such a consummation. Things more strange have happened in this land, and in the world at large, than that the Rothschilds, the Montefiores, and their compeers in colossal wealth, should purchase Palestine; and so far as the bankrupt government of the Sultan is concerned, the best use that could be made of this country would be to sell it. Now let us dismiss this subject, with the remark that although it is impossible to be in Palestine at the present day without having these and kindred topics thrust upon our attention, yet we need not dwell upon them, nor allow them to interfere with our special purposes.

We are continually meeting groups of donkeys, with baskets swinging on either side, and filled with the largest, brightest oranges I ever saw. They are to be sent by sea to foreign parts, I suppose, for there can be no local demand for such quantities of fruit.

No doubt; for this is but one of the many similar roads that converge from all parts of these gardens towards a common centre about the entrance into the city.

How extensive are the gardens?

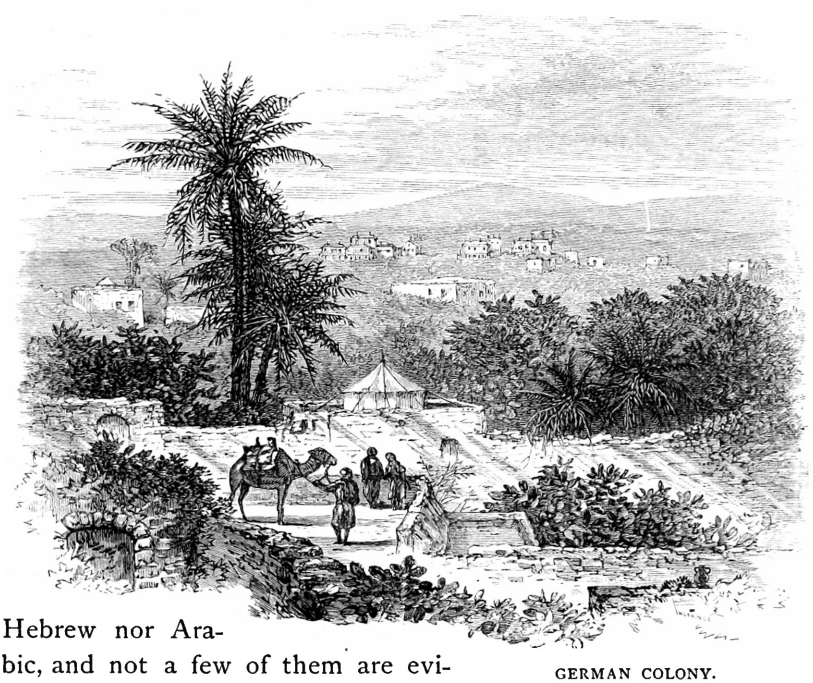
The entire length, from north to south, is about seven miles, the average breadth one mile and a half, and the variety and quantity of fruit produced is quite surprising. Did you ever compare the list of modern fruits with those mentioned in the Bible?

I have never had the specific information necessary for such a comparison.

No better data can be found in the country than those furnished by these gardens of Jaffa, and we may make the comparison here and now. The result will probably disappoint you. Those mentioned by the sacred writers, such as olives and figs, dates and apples, pomegranates and grapes, are all here; while the fruits that are the life and glory of these gardens—the orange, the lemon, the apricot, the peach, the pear, the plum, the quince, and the banana —do not appear at all on the Biblical list. In like manner the number and variety of berries, of vegetables, of nuts, and of flowers known and valued in our times, far exceed those of the ancients.

How do you account for the great superiority of the modern?

By the supposition that these fruits are not indigenous products of this country, but were brought into it from foreign lands, in connection with the Persian, Greek, and Roman empires, and, of course, after the canon even of the New Testament was closed. Many of the names in common use among the Arab peasants are neither



GERMAN COLONY.

Hebrew nor Arabic, and not a few of them are evidently Persian. It was not until after the Hebrew isolation had given place to general intercourse with distant lands that the fruits and vegetables in question were introduced into this country.

What place is this which we are laboriously approaching through this shifting sand?

It is the German colony, and bears the appropriate name of Sarona. The situation is high, and ought to be healthy. The houses, erected in the midst of pleasant gardens, with ample space around them, and painted white, have a very home-like and inviting appearance.

It is surprising to find veritable Germans upon this plain of Sharon. Who are they, and under whose auspices have they been led to emigrate to this lonely spot?

The motive or impulse is a religious one, and the parent society, called The Temple, has its head-quarters in Germany, I believe at Stuttgard. Though I have had their published articles of faith kindly sent me by Herr Hardegg, the head of a similar colony located at the foot of Carmel, near Haifa, I cannot easily give a summary of them. Their assumed title, The Temple, intimates the belief that they are to found some sort of a spiritual temple in the Holy Land. So far as I know, they are plain, honest, hard-working people. Amongst them are carpenters, masons, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and one or more representatives of nearly every other trade or profession in civilized life. The colony numbers, all told—men, women, and children—about two hundred souls. Herr Hoffman is the presiding elder of the little community; but I believe there are no recognized clergy amongst them, and no special importance is attached to the common ordinances of the Christian Church. The site occupied by that part of the colony near the city belonged originally to an American company, under the control of a Mr. Adams, which was mismanaged, and ended disastrously many years ago. But peace to Sarona and its kind-hearted people! It is full two hours' ride to er Râs, across the wide and fertile plain of Sharon, and we must push on.

As there are very few villages on this part of the plain, I suppose it must be unhealthy.

All along the river 'Aujeh, which you see below us on our left, malarial fevers are very common during the months of summer and autumn; and those who cultivate the land locate their homes at a distance—generally on the lower slopes of the mountains. You can see them dotting the foot-hills of Judæa far away to the south, and northward also, along the picturesque declivities of Samaria. That dilapidated castle coming into view on our left marks the site of er Râs, and to visit it we have come thus far out of our way.

What is it, or was it, and for what distinguished?

The castle was called Mirabel by the Crusaders, and built, doubtless, to command the fountain and the road. Er Râs means the

head, and the word is applied to capes, headlands, mountain-tops, etc. Here it indicates the fountain-head of the river 'Aujeh, which rises immediately below the castle.

Is the 'Aujeh mentioned in the Bible?

Not under that name. In Joshua xvii. 9, a river, Kanah, forms the dividing line between Ephraim and Manasseh—one tribe being on the south, the other on the north side of the river. The 'Aujeh enters the sea near Jaffa; and the territory of Ephraim, if it lay south of this river, must have included Jaffa itself, which seems to have belonged to Dan. There is nothing strange in the fact that the 'Aujeh is not mentioned in the Bible; for although one of the deepest and most formidable streams in the land, it is the shortest of them all. From the Râs to the sea is not more than ten miles; but it is almost the only river in the country that cannot be forded for many months in the year. I passed down on the other side of it, and found no place where it could be crossed until I reached the bridge not far from Sarona. The people at the bridge assured me that there was no ford except near the sea-shore; and so great is the depth even there, that my luggage had to be taken off the mules and carried over on the heads of the men.

As we come near I see it is a dark, sullen stream, creeping sluggishly through an impenetrable jungle of reeds and bushes. And here are great black buffaloes buried up to the eyes in its treacherous-looking depths.

You will find them in all such places. They are as fond of wallowing in the mire as are the wild hogs that also abound in this bottomless morass. But here we are at the ruined Castle of Mirabel; and this is the Râs el 'Aujeh which we have come to examine.

The two most remarkable features about it are the quiet outflow of such an immense fountain, and those curious reeds, with mop-like tops, that overshadow the deep marsh.

They well deserve attention, for they are the papyrus so famous in the ancient literary and economic history of Egypt and other countries.

Whether or not this is the true site of Antipatris can be more satisfactorily discussed this evening in our tent at Kefr Sâba. Let us now make a careful inspection of this spot and the immediate

surroundings, that we may be the better able to examine the respective claims of the two rivals for the honor of being the site of the historic and Biblical Antipatris. The question is complicated by contradictory evidence, and the decision depends mainly upon the mere physical characteristics of the two sites; hence the importance of our visit to this place. The essential conditions are three:

That there should be satisfactory indications of a city as old as the age of Herod, at least;

That it should be on or near the Roman road from Jerusalem to Cæsarea;

That there should be an abundance of water—a river, in fact—at the site itself.

No place can be the Antipatris of Josephus that lacks either of these conditions. Let us now continue our ride to Kefr Sâba, and inspect that locality also.

How far is it to Kefr Sâba?

I once came here direct from there in an hour and a quarter, but I rode fast, and the distance must be six miles.

Do you know anything about the Castle of Mirabel?

My guide, an old Moslem from Hableh, where I was encamped, told me that it was built by Abuna Barte—Father Barte—his way of pronouncing Bonaparte—and that it was destroyed by Abd Allah Pasha; both statements, of course, absurd. It may have been built by the Crusaders, but upon the foundations of an older castle—possibly the one to which the little army of "two hundred soldiers, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred,"[1] brought the Apostle Paul. They probably arrived here early in the morning, for they left Jerusalem at nine o'clock the previous night, and must have marched all night, and in haste, lest they should be attacked by that band of more than forty fanatics, who had "bound themselves with an oath that they will neither eat nor drink until they have killed" Paul.[2] The soldiers and spearmen returned to Jerusalem, and the horsemen continued their march to Cæsarea along the road which we are now following, at least for several miles. It was then and still is the great highway through Central Palestine to Egypt.

[1] Acts xxiii. 23.

[2] Acts xxiii. 21.

My guide greatly amused me with his account of Abuna Barte's march through this valley en route for Acre. The Moslems from Nâblus and the surrounding mountains were continually fighting the French soldiers, and he himself, then a mere lad, participated in these skirmishes. There is no reason to doubt that Bonaparte's army did actually follow this route, which is shorter, safer, and infinitely easier than the one along the sea-shore. But my hero must have confounded the doings of his father with his own achievements, for it is eighty years since Napoleon passed this way.

What is the name of that respectable-looking village ahead of us?

Jiljûlieh; and it is supposed to mark the site of that Gilgal whose king was slain by Joshua's army, as mentioned in chap. xii. ver. 23, with the curious addition that he was "king of the nations of Gilgal." It appears to have been a place of considerable importance in former times, and no doubt occupies the site of an ancient city. The great road from the north still passes through it. Those Moslem tombs and this dilapidated khân remind one of the times when this highway was frequented by the caravans that carried down to Egypt the merchandise of the East.

Kefr Sâba, April 7th. Evening.

It seems to me that no one who has visited the two localities of er Râs and Kefr Sâba, and compared what they are now with the description given by Josephus, can hesitate for a moment in regard to its site as being at er Râs.

Nearly all our information on the subject of Antipatris is derived from Josephus, who mentions it several times both in his Antiquities and in his Jewish Wars.[1] In one place he tells us that "Herod erected another city in the plain called Capharsaba, where he chose out a fit place, both for plenty of water and goodness of soil, and proper for the production of what was there planted; where a river encompassed the city itself, and a grove of the best trees for magnitude was round about it. This he named Antipatris, from his father, Antipater." Again, "Herod built a city in the finest plain that was in his kingdom, and which had rivers and

[1] Ant. 13, 15, 1; 16, 5, 2: B. J. 1, 4, 7; 1, 21, 9.

trees in abundance, and named it Antipatris." The only difficulty in the question is the name Kefr Sâba, which is no doubt identical with the Capharsaba of Josephus; and if the character of this place could be made to correspond to the description, it would be accepted by all as the true site of Antipatris. This, however, is quite impossible. There are here no remains of an ancient city such as Herod erected. No Roman road passes through it or near it; and there is not at or anywhere in the neighborhood a river of water, or even a brook, and, from the nature of the position occupied by this village, there never could have been. All the three essential conditions, therefore, are wanting at Kefr Sâba. The only supply of water for the village is from two deep wells below it on the east, and a small pool south of it. Neither is the land immediately about it particularly fertile, while back of it commence those sandy downs which extend westward to the sea. But the plain around and north of er Râs may fairly be called the most fertile in Herod's kingdom. I once rode directly from Kefr Sâba to er Râs through a veritable sea of the tallest and most luxuriant wheat that I have seen in Palestine. The grove mentioned by Josephus has disappeared; but this can easily be explained.

How do you account for the transfer of the name Capharsaba to this place from er Râs?

Two possible explanations occur to me. The first is based upon the statement of Josephus, made more than once, that Antipatris was built in the plain of Capharsaba, which may have been the name of a district that included the whole region from er Râs to this village. Palestine is even now divided up into similar districts. Herod changed the name of that part of the plain on which he built the city, and called it Antipatris. Another supposition I think more probable: Capharsaba was originally at er Râs; but when the inhabitants found that Herod was determined to transform their village into a government station, they voluntarily removed from it to this place, and transferred the name to their new home. If they were in his way, Herod would not have hesitated to remove them by force. Thus there came to be two Capharsabas; and, by a confusion quite natural to persons not acquainted with the local circumstances, both places might be occasionally called Antipatris.

This supposition will best account for the singular discrepancies in the ancient Itineraries. The Jerusalem Itinerary places Lydda ten miles from Antipatris, which answers well enough for er Râs, but not at all for Kefr Sâba, which is sixteen miles distant. In the Onomasticon, Antipatris is said to be six miles south of Gilgal, which is also sufficiently accurate, whether the site of Gilgal be at Jiljûlieh or at Kilkîlieh, but cannot apply to Kefr Sâba, which is north of er Râs and west of either of the supposed sites of Gilgal. Nor are these the only discrepancies in those ancient documents. According to one, Cæsarea is forty miles from Lydda; and another makes the distance fifty-nine miles.

It is not necessary to analyze all the variations in the Itineraries, or to discuss certain historical notices, which show that the position at er Râs was availed of for strategical purposes by Alexander Jannæus. The trench dug and the line of fortifications erected by him, from the mountain to the sea, must have been connected with er Râs and the 'Aujeh, and not with this Kefr Sâba. On the whole, therefore, it seems safe to accept of er Râs as the site of Antipatris, to which Paul was brought by the Roman soldiers. Major Wilson, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, was the first, I believe, to locate Antipatris at er Râs, and all the gentlemen connected with the same expedition to this country have acquiesced in the identification.

But there comes the call for dinner, and we must return to the tent.

What an abundant table the Lord, by the ministration of this lively cook of ours, has spread for us here in the wilderness! Neatly got up, too, and nothing seems wanting. Do you know, I looked on during those days of preparation at Jaffa with wonder and alarm at the hundred and one things which you were gathering around you. I could not conceive where they were to be stowed away, or how they were to be carried on the mules. Now I find that everything has a place, and an office to discharge. It is said that Bonaparte never spent more than fifteen minutes at the table. However that may be, I have no inclination to devote much time at present to this "vulgar function of eating." Dinner over, I cannot abide in the tent; for, though it has somewhat the shape, it has

none of the glory of this starry canopy above. As to sleep, the very idea seems absurd. Boyhood's possible and impossible fancies gather thick about me in living realities. I was ever given to reverie, and many a day have lain and dreamed of this land of the sun, its mysteries and its miracles, and longed to be there, and wondered if I ever should. And now here am I— But you smile, and I do not choose just now to furnish food for your mirth.

You have been dreaming with Longfellow, who

> Used to lie
> And gaze into the summer sky,
> Where the sailing clouds went by
> Like ships upon the sea.

All this is half a century behind my experience. At that remote date I might have understood you, but not now. From this on waste no more breath in rhapsodies. A pilgrimage to Palestine has too much of the real in it to permit us to expire in the romantic. We had better prepare to imitate this muleteer, that we may be ready for the early dawn, and the bustle of a new day.

The fellow is sound asleep on the bare ground, and, like Jacob at Bethel, he has actually got a stone for his pillow.

You will often see that in this country. I have tried it myself, but could never bring sleep and stone pillows together. I suspect Jacob was not used to it, for he was disturbed with extraordinary dreams; but to Abd Allah, with his hard head and stuffed cap, this stone is soft as a cushion of down.

You do not mean that he will sleep all night on this sandy soil, and with no covering but his old cloak?

Certainly; and if he were at home he would do the same. This custom of sleeping in their ordinary clothes is the basis of that humane law of Moses for the protection of the poor: "If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?"[1] I envy him his slumbers; they are the sweet ones of the laboring man. And now come in; let us consult the "best of books," and then com-

[1] Exod. xxii. 26, 27.

mend ourselves and all we love to that good Shepherd who slumbers not nor sleeps.

April 8th.

We make an early start this morning, for there is nothing here to detain us, and Abd Allah is anxious to get to our camping-place at Tawâhîn ez Zerka, near Cæsarea, in good time, more especially because the last half of the distance is infested by the worst class of Bedawîn Arabs in the country. Indeed, the entire route leads through a region without villages or inhabitants; and it appears always to have had this character—a region simply to be passed through without delay or description. There is not one Biblical or historic site between this and Cæsarea, at least not on the road we shall travel. So it was when Paul came this way; and thus all the armies, ancient and modern, that must have traversed this long valley, appear to have merely passed through it, as a ship does over the sea, leaving no trace behind.

Though the path may lead us through no historic sites, the whole land is Biblical, and, therefore, full of interest to me. What is the name of that large village to the east of us, and in the middle of the plain?

Kilkîlieh; and some locate Gilgal there, instead of at Jiljûlieh. The name favors the latter, but the position agrees better with Kilkîlieh. It has some good houses, and a few shops, to which the surrounding villagers resort for the simple requirements of their domestic life. That village at the foot of the mountains to the south-east of it is called Hableh. I once spent two nights there during my rambling about this region of country.

There seems to be a castle at the village.

Like many others in this region, this village is so constructed as to resemble a castle, and the entrances and lanes are so narrow that they can be easily closed up in case of danger. Hableh, no doubt, occupies the site of an ancient city, as indicated by old cisterns hewn in the rock, and sepulchres, and by many of the stones built into the walls of the miserable hovels of the inhabitants. The place was overrun by droves of small donkeys that roamed round the tents, which were pitched on the threshing-floor. They seemed to exist by fighting and braying, and kept up both all night long.

To which of the tribes did the country through which we are now passing belong?

The question about the river Kanah, that constituted the boundary between Ephraim and Manasseh, is not yet decided; but I think that this entire region belonged to Ephraim. The water-courses that cut across the plain from the eastern mountains are laid down, even in our best maps, very much at random, and must continue to be unreliable until corrected by the surveys of the Palestine Exploration Fund. As the 'Aujeh is quite too far south to be the Kanah of Joshua, the next river north of it, the Fâlik, may be the one that separated the two tribes. The name itself may suggest the idea of separation, or that which divides. But without attaching importance to this verbal hint, this river would seem to constitute a reasonable boundary between the two tribes. It starts with the fountains of Nâblus, drains the hills of Samaria, and receives numberless tributaries from north and south, and enters the sea midway between Jaffa and Cæsarea. Ephraim and Manasseh were "a great people;" had more than one "lot" assigned to them; and a large part of what in after-times constituted the Kingdom of Samaria belonged to them. Their territory appears to have extended quite across the country from the Jordan to the sea, and a long way also northwards; for they met together in Asher, which must have been somewhere about Carmel. It is utterly impossible, however, to lay down the boundaries of these tribes; and their cities were strangely intermingled, especially in the plain of Esdraelon, as appears from the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters of Joshua.

A large part of their mountains seem to have been covered with forests in the time of Joshua; for, in answer to their complaint, he said, "If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country, and cut down for thyself;" and again, "Thou art a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot only: but the mountain shall be thine; for it is a wood, and thou shalt cut it down."[1]

The word translated wood is y'ar, and the Arabic w'ar is the same, and for the same thing. Many of these y'ars are mentioned

[1] Josh. xvii. 17, 18.

in the Bible, and some of them still exist — rough, rocky regions, overgrown with brushwood and small trees. I was reminded of these and other Biblical matters during a lonely ride from Nâblus through the mountains to er Râs. For several miles I continued to meet parties of women carrying on their heads large loads of wood, which they were taking to Nâblus. I must have passed more than a hundred. They came in groups, staggering along up the mountain with their heavy burdens, and my sympathy was painfully enlisted in their behalf. The day was oppressively hot, and they had often to put down their loads and rest by the way-side. At length I came to an extensive w'ar, where other women were cutting down wood, and binding it into bundles similar to those I saw carried on the road. The sight sadly illustrated the severity of the sentence pronounced upon the Gibeonites and their associates, who also dwelt in those same regions. To "be hewers of wood and drawers of water" was indeed a dreadful doom.[1] Escaping from this tangled w'ar, I came to a village called 'Azzûn, where were large piles of those bundles of wood ready to be carried to market. I was here informed that a wedding was to be celebrated at the place in a few days, and that the expedition to Nâblus which I had encountered had for its object the purchase of the bride's trousseau with the money received for the wood—a novel method to achieve a result which must be accomplished in some way by all of the sex who purpose matrimony. The brides of 'Azzûn, it must be confessed, have to obtain their outfit by toil and drudgery which only the daughters of hewers of wood and drawers of water could sustain.

What is the trouble among the muleteers? They appear to have lost the way, and have scattered about, each one seeking a path for himself.

They are searching for a safe place to cross the main branch of the river Fâlik.

I do not see any river, but merely a meandering line of tall grass.

That is characteristic of all the streams that cut across this plain to the sea. It is not the water, but the treacherous mud

[1] Josh. ix. 21.

concealed by the grass, that the muleteers are afraid of. They are safely over, however, and we may continue our ride. Several years ago I crossed this plain farther north, going from Cæsarea to Samaria. As we came near Abu Zabûrah, there called el Akhdar, I noticed some men ahead of us with loaded mules, which, after a little hesitation, they forced into the river, when down they all tumbled into the bottomless mire. Our men assisted to cut the ropes and extricate the poor beasts from their dangerous situation. Going some distance down the stream, we found a place entirely covered with thick reeds and grass, which the muleteers broke and trampled down, so as to form a practical causeway, over which we crossed without difficulty. We shall come to that river farther on; but Abd Allah intends to keep to the west, along the sandy ridge, and thus avoid those perplexing watercourses in this soft plain. Somewhere in this neighborhood must have been a station called Bethar, mentioned in one Itinerary as sixteen miles from Cæsarea; and there is a ruin called Barîn some distance east of our road which may mark the site of Bethar, but I know nothing about it.

I notice a very striking difference between this western side of the plain and that on the east: here we have no villages, while there the hill-sides are dotted with them.

You observe also that the width of the plain differs considerably in different parts, according as the foot-hills project into it or recede from it. But the plain itself is everywhere extremely fertile, and now clothed with most promising crops of wheat and barley, and richly garnished with an endless variety of gay flowers.

What may be the breadth of the plain?

The average width is about four miles. Once I crossed it from the oak-clad glades south-east of Cæsarea to Bâkah, where I spent two nights and a quiet Sabbath. You can just see the village far away to the north-east. During my stay at Bâkah I filled several pages of my note-book with the names of villages and ruined sites in that neighborhood; but the only one that seemed Biblical was Jett, a place about two miles to the south of Bâkah. There was a Gath-rimmon in the tribe of Manasseh that was given to the Levites;[1] and as that district probably belonged to Manasseh, it is pos-

[1] Josh. xxi. 25.

sible that this village occupies that ancient site. The mountains on both sides of the road from Bâkah to Samaria are crowded with villages, and equally so the country to the north, quite out to the plain of Esdraelon. The chalky marl-hills of Samaria are clothed with splendid olive-groves and fig-orchards, and are even now thickly inhabited by an industrious though turbulent and fanatical people.



SYRIAN OAKS.

Salîm comes up to say that the country from this to Cæsarea is full of robbers, and he advises that, after we cross Abu Zabûrah, which is a short distance ahead, we all keep together for mutual protection. This we can well afford to do, since there is nothing of special interest to call us aside in any direction.

The sandy downs, with their pine bushes, are falling back towards the sea, giving place to a firmer soil, upon which stand here and there venerable oak-trees, like patriarchs of by-gone generations left alone in the wilderness.

They are the beginning of the largest and most impressive oak forest in western Palestine. It extends northwards to the eastern base of Carmel, and, with slight interruptions, it continues along the western slopes of Galilee quite to the lofty Jermŭk, west of Safet. I have spent many days in wandering through those vast oak glades.

The scenery is becoming quite park-like, and very pretty. The trees are all of one kind, and apparently very old.

The Arabic name for this species of oak is sindiân—a large evergreen-tree, whose botanical name is quercus pseudo-coccifera. There are other varieties of the oak interspersed occasionally with these, but the prevailing tree everywhere is the noble, venerable, and solemn sindiân.

We have been in the saddle about eight hours, and I hope our day's ride is nearly over.

And so it is; for here we are at the margin of the marsh of the Zerka, the Crocodile River, and in half an hour we shall reach Tawâhîn ez Zerka—the mills of the Zerka—near the sea-shore, where alone we can encamp safely in this nest of robbers. Cæsarea is on our left, and we shall pass between it and this marsh northwards through the vast quarries of the ancient city to our camping-ground at the mills.

Tawâhîn ez Zerka, April 8th. Evening.

As the main object of this detour to Cæsarea and Dor was to visit a part of the Holy Land which we should not otherwise see, I wish to extend my acquaintance with the surrounding country as far as possible.

For that purpose no better position can be found than our present camp. It is, in fact, the centre of a region of great interest, both historic and Biblical. This Crocodile River, with its marshes and tributary brooks, has ever had a peculiar fascination about it, occasioned partly by the feeling of insecurity which always attends its exploration, and in part by its own unique character. On one

occasion I spent a night, for the sake of protection, at a village a few miles north-east of these mills, called Sindiâneh—the name no doubt derived from the oak woods which surround it.

I had a delightful ramble early the next morning in those grand old forests, and then understood perfectly how Absalom could be caught by the thick branches of an oak. The strong arms of these trees spread out so near the ground that one cannot walk erect beneath them; and on a frightened mule, such a head of hair as that vain but wicked son polled every year would certainly become inextricably entangled: and it is interesting to know that the region east of the Jordan, that "wood of Ephraim" where the battle was fought, is still covered with thick oaks, tangled bushes, and thorny creepers growing over ragged rocks, and ruinous precipices, down which the rebel army plunged in wild dismay, horses and men crushing each other to death in remediless ruin. Thus twenty thousand men perished in that fatal wood, which "devoured more people that day than the sword devoured."[1]

That "very great heap of stones" over the pit into which Absalom was thrown was not raised in honor of the king's son, but in detestation of the traitor's enormous crime; and you will find miniature heaps of the same kind and significance all over the country. It is a wide-spread custom for each one, as he passes the spot where any notorious murderer has been buried, to cast a stone upon it. I have often seen this done, and, yielding to the popular indignation, have thrown my stone with the rest.

I am reminded of all this by the conduct of some of the muleteers yesterday, who actually dismounted to spit upon such a heap, and add their pebble to the growing pile. They said the wretch who lay buried there was a robber who infested the road, and committed many cruel murders, and used the incident to enforce their admonitions upon us to keep together in that part of our ride.

The early light began to reveal the character of the scene around me; the country from north to south was buried under a dense, low-lying fog, which left the many-shaped hill-tops peering above it like green islets on the surface of a placid lake. When the sun arose, this silvery sea, as if startled by some invisible spirit, became agi-

[1] 2 Sam. xviii. 6–17.

tated in an extraordinary manner, and great pyramids of shining vapor burst up from beneath, swelling higher and higher among the oaks until it escaped through their thick boughs, and vanished away in the clear vault of heaven. All this commotion and gorgeous display I found was owing to a brisk breeze which came up the valley from the sea at Cæsarea. Acting from below, and itself turned about by every bend and swell of the hills, it swayed and twisted the yielding vapor according to its own eccentric will. Such fogs are quite common on the great plains along the coast, as we shall see in the land of the Philistines. The night had been clear, and rather cool for the season, and the dew rolled off the tent that morning like rain, and the early sunbeams "sprinkled the earth with pearls and diamonds," as Milton's muse describes those pendent drops that glitter and sparkle from every leaf in the forest and blade in the field. There was a village on my left called Khŭbbaizeh, the Arabic name for the malva, the Hebrew nearly for the rose, and both malvas and wild roses adorn that sweet vale. Many other hamlets repose in those glorious woods, but we need not load our memories with their obscure and ignoble names.

Having left Sindiâneh, I came to a place bearing the ominous name of 'Ain el Meiyiteh—Dead Fountain; and the tell east of it is Sit Leîla, a name more frequently heard in Arab song than any other. We now turned westwards towards Cæsarea, leaving the main road, which keeps on southwards through the plain of Sharon to Ludd and Ramleh. The whole of that region is as fertile as beautiful, but most of it is uncultivated, and all infested with robbers. At Sindiâneh I wanted to send my baggage directly across to Tantûra, while I came round this way to Cæsarea, and had to hire a guard sufficiently large not merely to protect my muleteers in going, but themselves in returning. The people could not then venture from village to village but in companies and well armed.

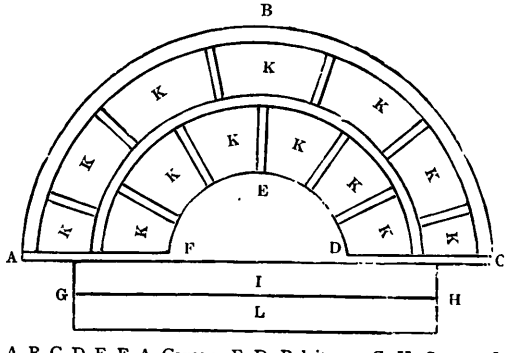
A large building some two miles to the north-east of us is called the Kŭsr, and to reach it one must pick his way through bushes and tall reeds, across sluggish streams with bottomless mud, black as ink. Ignorant of these treacherous bogs, on my first visit I struck directly for the Kŭsr, and was soon floundering in unsub-

stantial mire up to the belly of my horse, and glad to get safely out again on the same side by which I entered.

In the neighborhood of the Kŭsr are large fountains, now called el Mîamâs, the water of which was collected in a large pool, and then carried by an aqueduct to Cæsarea—but which, of course, is now broken.

There seem to have been substantial buildings about the Kŭsr; and, indeed, one stumbles over the grass-covered ruins of a considerable town.

The Kŭsr itself was doubtless one of Cæsarea's theatres, and any plan of a Roman theatre will enable you to comprehend the details of the edifice. It is semicircular, and the length of the chord is one hundred and sixty-six feet. The seats are gone, and the cavea much changed; but the vomitories and vaults beneath are in good preservation, and are now used for stables and granaries by the peasants. A tower on the south-eastern corner and the huts inside are comparatively modern, and were erected probably when the building was turned into a Saracenic castle. The prospect over the hills of Samaria and the far-spreading plain of Sharon is very beautiful; and thither flocked the laughter-loving Greeks of Cæsarea to enjoy the excitement of theatric games and the pleasures of the open country at the same time. The topography of the place is decidedly interesting. Directly north of the Kŭsr terminate the last spurs of Carmel in a bold promontory called Khâshm en Nazûr. South of it is the great marsh ez Zoar, fading out into the sandy downs and bushy slopes of the upper Sharon. The ruined villages of Um el 'Allak and Mu'allakah—both names suggestive of the horse-leech, which greatly abounds in the marsh—appear



A B C D E F A, Cavea; F D, Pulpitum; G H, Scene; I, Proscenium; K K K, Cunei separated scalæ; F E D F, Orchestra; L, Proscenium. The vomitories are beneath the Cavea.

PLAN OF THEATRE.

on the northern ridge; and Bureikîeh, three miles distant in the same direction, is inhabited by the peasants who cultivate the land around the fountains of Mîamâs. The water from a fountain near Subbarîn was in former times led down by Bureikîeh to the Kŭsr, where it was associated with the stream from Mîamâs, and the two united were carried along the perpendicular base of Jebel Khâshm, across the swamp of ez Zoar, to the shore, and thence by a long aqueduct southwards to the city. This was a remarkable work, and much of it is still quite perfect. The road is now upon, or, rather, within the aqueduct, over various brooks which, passing beneath it, are lost in the general marsh, and, with nerves sufficiently steady, one might follow on the top of it quite to the western side of the marsh; for, if I remember aright, there is not a broken arch in the entire line. Suspicious-looking streams soak their way through tall reeds and flags, all pouring their blackish water into the marsh. The largest of these, called Shukeîŭk, is said to rise in Wady Sŭf-sâfeh, about two hours to the south-east. These streams run into the swamp, and not to the sea, in consequence of a low rocky ridge which extends parallel to the coast, and about half a mile from it. This formation is the same fossiliferous sandy limestone as that out of which nearly all the cities on the seaboard are built, and it has here been hewn and cut up by quarriers in the most extraordinary manner; indeed, the cuttings and quarrying are more extensive than those of any other city on this coast. I once spent several hours searching among them for inscriptions, and found none; but it appeared to me scarcely possible that such enormous quarryings were made by the short-lived city of Cæsarea, and that, therefore, this was merely the Roman name for a more ancient city. I had read this before, but was convinced that the original name could not have been Strato's Tower, for that is Latin, and these quarries were opened long before the Romans ever appeared in Syria. That primitive city may have been the frontier town in this direction of the Phœnicians, but this is uncertain, for the boundary between them and the Philistines was never clearly defined; yet it is not probable that the former had at any time permanent possession of the coast farther south than Cæsarea, for the country beyond, for many a mile, has always been an uninhabited desert.

April 9th.

Is there anything of interest between Haifa and Cæsarea?

The best answer is to pass it in review during our morning's ride to Tantûra, the ancient Dor. By way of introduction, listen to some remarks on the general character of the entire Syrian seaboard. From Carmel and northwards there are numerous headlands, with bays on the north of them more or less deep, by which the line of the coast falls back to the east, as it were, by successive steps. Carmel itself, with the Bay of Acre, is not only the first but one of the most striking. North of Acre is the Ladder of Tyre, which consists of three such capes: el Musheîrifeh, en Nakûrah, and el Baiyod. Between Tyre and Sidon is the low headland of Sarafend; and from Sidon to Beirût are three Nakûrahs (rocky points), with their retreating coves of Rumeîleh, Neby Yûnas, and es Sa'diat, near the Damûr. Then comes the projecting cape, Ras Beirût, with its Bay of St. George falling back to the deeper cove of Jûneh. The next salient point is the Theoprosopon of the ancients, north of Bŭtrûn, beyond which, by successive steps, at Cape Enfeh and the Mina of Tripoli, the coast enters far eastwards into the plain of 'Akkâr. With lesser indentations at Ruwad and Balinas, we come to the long low promontory of Lâdikîyeh. Finally, stretching across the open sea at the so-called Bay of Antioch, we pass Ras el Khanzîr and enter the Bay of Skandarûn. Such is the configuration of the northern half of this coast; but from Carmel southwards it runs in a direct line west of south, past 'Athlît, Cæsarea, Jaffa, Askelon, Gaza, and quite on round to Egypt.

After this rapid survey we will begin again at the point of Carmel. It is three hours thence to 'Athlît, with no important villages or ruins intervening. I cannot identify that place with any ancient site whatever. Neither the Bible, nor Josephus, nor any profane historian or geographer mentions it, nor does its name appear in any of the old Itineraries; and yet the existing remains are more numerous and striking and in better preservation than those of almost any old town along the coast. The exterior wall, built of large stones and protected by a ditch cut through the solid rock where necessary, enclosed a quadrangular space reaching quite across the headland on which the city stood. Most of this wall

has been carried away to build the fortifications of Acre. The Acropolis, occupying the extremity of the cape, was cut off from the outer city by a wall prodigiously strong, some sections of which remain entire, and just as they were first put up. There is no patchwork, no broken columns or other fragments, as in most Greek and Roman structures in Syria. Just within the wall stands a portion of a building whose character it is difficult to comprehend. It was erected on vaults of great strength, and the fragment on the east side towers up at least seventy feet high. There it stands in its loneliness, the first object that strikes the eye of the traveller either up or down the coast. Near the top on the interior, so high that it strains the neck to look at them, are flying buttresses, resting below on the heads of men, from which sprung the arches of the lofty roof. Who erected this grand edifice, and when? The only history we have of 'Athlît begins with the Crusaders, who call it Castellum Perigrinorum—Pilgrims' Castle—because they used to land there when Acre was in the hands of the Saracens. But there was, doubtless, a city here long before the Crusades; and I find it difficult to believe that those temporary occupants of this coast had leisure to erect such gigantic masses of masonry. They probably at this place, as at so many others, appropriated the ruins of ancient works, and remodelled them to suit their own convenience.

The modern village occupies the whole of the Acropolis, but many of the houses are encumbered by immense masses of débris thrown down by the destructive earthquake of 1837. A low rocky ridge begins a little to the north of 'Athlît, extending far southwards; and in front of the place it rises to a considerable elevation, and is there cut up in a singular manner by old quarries. Directly east of the village a broad road was hewn through the ridge, which is yet the common highway to it from the surrounding country, and well-worn tracks of chariot-wheels are still to be seen along this remarkable passage.

The question returns, What is 'Athlît, either by this or any other name? I have no answer. The Hebrew writers may have had no occasion to mention it, because that part of the coast was not in their possession. The Roman and Greek authors and travel-



'ATHLÎT—CASTELLUM PERIGRINORUM.

lers generally passed round on the east of Carmel, as I believe, and did not visit it. Strabo says, "After Acre is the tower of Strato, having a station for ships. Between them is Mount Carmel and names of cities, but nothing besides: the city of Sycamenon, Bucolon, and the city of Crocodiles." The ruins of this last town are at the mouth of the river Zerka. The silence of Strabo with regard to both 'Athlît and Dor, favors the idea that the Roman road passed on the east of Carmel. Sycamenon is probably Kaimon. The Bible repeatedly mentions Tantûra by the name of Dor and her towns, and 'Athlît may have been one of her "towns." But enough about 'Athlît, except that her people are great villains, and so are those of et Tîreh, at the foot of Carmel, north-east of it. 'Ain Haud, on the brow of the mountain, may possibly mark the site of En-haddah, given to Issachar. It is nearly three hours from 'Athlît to Tantûra, and the two villages, Kefr Lâm and Sŭrafend, both apparently occupying ancient sites, are between them. Farther inland are Yebla and 'Ain Ghŭzal. The name Yebla resembles Ibleam, which was assigned to Manasseh, though belonging to the lot of Issachar. This geographical survey of Syria's long seaboard, and description of 'Athlît, has brought us to Tantûra.

It is a sad and sickly hamlet of wretched huts, on a bare sea-beach, with a marshy flat between it and the eastern hills. The sheikh's residence and the public menzûl for travellers are the only respectable houses. Dor occupied a low tell on the shore about half a mile farther north, and there we shall find remains of the ancient city which are of considerable interest.

That fragment of a castle, now called el Kŭsr, is the most conspicuous object on this part of the coast. It stands solitary and alone, on the very edge of the shore, and the marvel is that it has not been brought down by one of the many earthquakes which have, in the past ages, overthrown the cities of this country.

What is the history of Dor, either ancient or modern?

In Joshua xi. 2 it is stated that the kings "in the borders of Dor on the west" were with Hazor in the great battle at the waters of Merom; and "the king of Dor, in the coast of Dor," is in the list of the thirty-and-one kings whom Joshua smote.[1] We

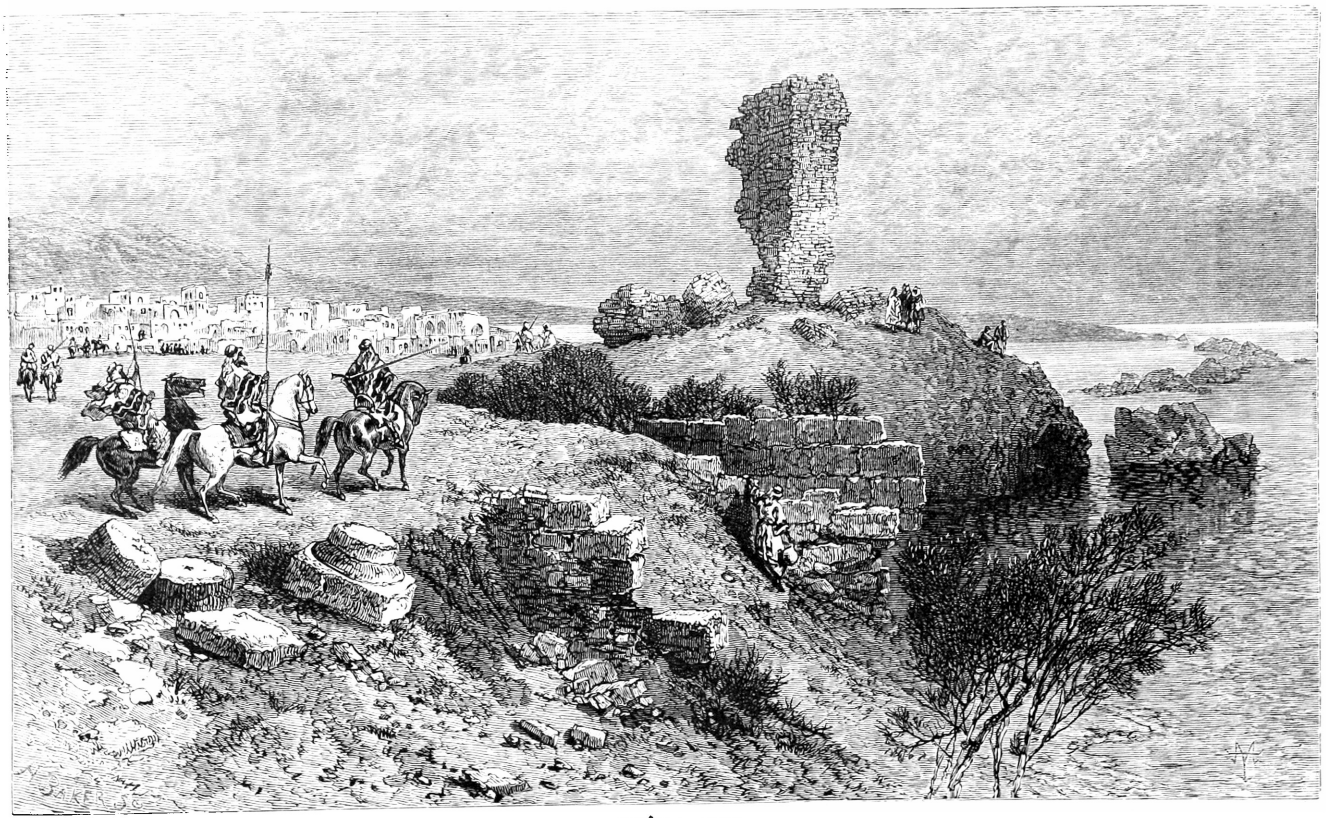
[1] Josh. xii. 23.

learn also from Joshua xvii. 11 that "the inhabitants of Dor and her towns" were assigned to Manasseh, and Josephus says that the territory of Manasseh extended from the Jordan to the city Dora; but from Judges i. 27 it appears that Manasseh did not "drive out the inhabitants of Dor and her towns," but the Canaanites "would dwell in the land," and when Israel was strong they were put to tribute. No further notice of Dor occurs till the time of Solomon. In 1 Kings iv. 11 it is stated that the son of Abinadab, one of the "twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household," had all the region of Dor under him. Josephus adds that it was Abinadab himself "which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife." These are all the Biblical notices of Dor, but it is frequently mentioned in the Maccabees; and from the account of the resistance which it offered to Antiochus, who besieged it in vain with an army of one hundred and twenty thousand men of war and eight thousand horsemen, we may conclude that the fortifications were then—B.C. 140—exceedingly strong, and the soldiers of Tryphon very faithful and resolute.[1] In the Onomasticon it is said to have been deserted, as it has been very often since. The castle may have been built by the Crusaders; but along the shore at its base, and elsewhere about the tell on which it stood, are old foundations and numerous columns which must have belonged to the ancient city. This little bay running inland directly south of the Kŭsr, and the line of five small islets in front of the present village, which might easily be joined together, would form a snug harbor for native boats. The entrance to it would be by the inlet at the Kŭsr, and should "Dor and her towns" ever rise again into importance, such a harbor will be required.

There is nothing to detain us here, and, as Salîm is to meet us at Herod's Mole in Cæsarea, we will now return thither.

Twenty minutes south of Tantûra a considerable stream, called el Mufjûr, enters the sea. It descends from Belâd er Roha, and is probably the same as that in Wady ed Dâlieh. The beach is thickly strewn with pretty shells, and the sand is solid enough to make the ride along the rippling surf delightful. It is two hours to the mouth of the river Zerka, and half an hour farther to Cæsarea.

[1] 1 Macc. xv.



TANTÛRA—DOR.

What could have induced Herod to select this place for a harbor, on an open coast without projecting headland or protection of any kind?

The rich country back of it to Samaria and Nâblus probably furnishes the explanation. It is also in the centre of a long reach of coast entirely destitute of harbors, and this offers another reason; and, moreover, it is not quite true that there is no natural protection to serve as the basis for an artificial harbor. Several ledges of rock run out into the sea from the shore, and the king took advantage of two, between which the water was deepest, and there constructed great moles, enclosing a space larger than the Piræus. Josephus says so, not I. It never could have been sufficiently long to protect a single large ship of the present day.

Cæsarea has always been invested with a peculiar interest, to my mind, not so much for its own eventful history, nor because it was the capital of Palestine, but chiefly on account of its honorable and most important connection with the Apostolic Church. It was here that the good Cornelius fasted, prayed, and gave alms, which came up before God as a memorial, until an angel of the Lord appeared, and directed him to send unto Joppa for Simon, whose surname is Peter. There another vision revealed to that apostle the great fundamental truth, "that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;"[1] and thereby prepared this bearer of "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" to unlock the door to the Gentile world. Here the "apostle of the circumcision" first learned that he "should not call any man common or unclean;"[2] here the Holy Ghost was first granted to the heathen; and here took place the first Gentile baptism.

Certainly we have abundant reason to cherish the memory of Cæsarea.

Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, and greatest of foreign missionaries, often visited it, and was here held prisoner for two whole years. Standing in chains where some of these ruins now lie, he made his noble speeches, reasoning "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," before Felix and Drusilla, Festus, Agrippa,

[1] Acts x. 34, 35. [2] Acts x. 28.

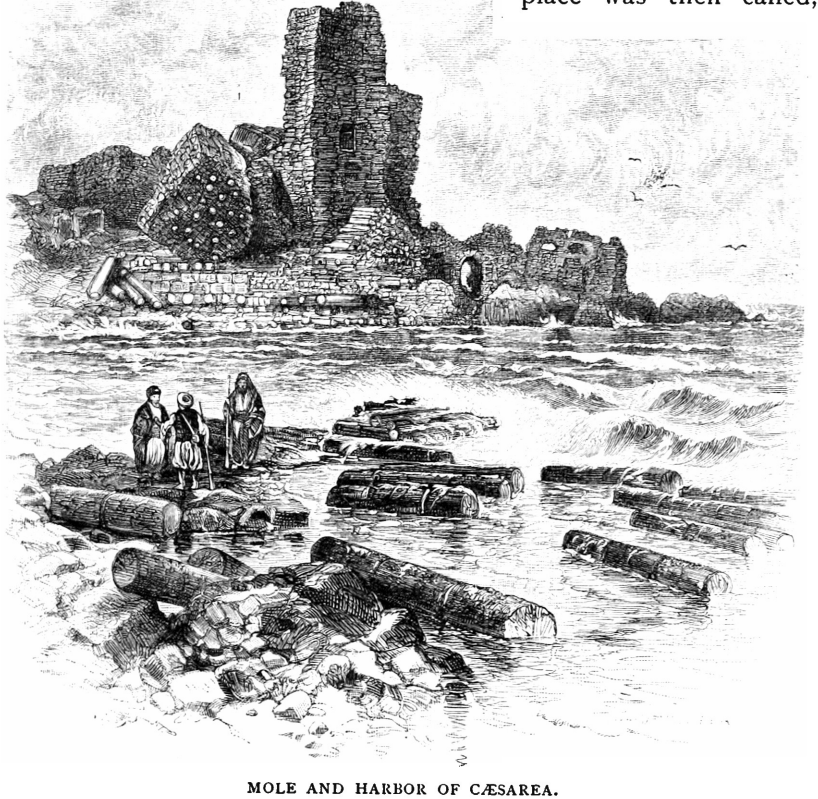
and Berenice—characters somewhat famous, and most of them not a little infamous, in their day. Eusebius, the historian, was born and lived in Cæsarea; and here Origen studied and wrote commentaries. But we need not prolong the list of her honors. They do but exaggerate her present utter desolation.

The ruins of Cæsarea remain precisely as they were forty years ago, upon my first visit. The area enclosed by the existing wall extends along the shore about the fourth of a mile, and is some forty rods wide from east to west. The wall was built of small but well-cut stone, was strengthened by sixteen square towers, and protected by a broad ditch; but still it could not have been a place of much strength, nor is it celebrated for any great military events. We are not to suppose that its vast population, stated as high as two hundred thousand, was confined within these narrow limits. On the contrary, there are abundant traces of suburbs scattered all over the plain, and the enclosed area was little more than the acropolis of the city. The harbor was at the south-west corner of this citadel, and we can trace its whole extent by the existing remains. Look at them, and then turn to Josephus,[1] and see if you can discover any resemblance. Beyond all doubt, much of that description is magniloquent Josephian hyperbole. Who can read of the mole, two hundred feet broad, built of stones more than fifty feet long, eighteen wide, and nine deep, without a smile? Why, the whole harbor enclosed by it is not much broader. But it is useless to criticise this extraordinary description. I cannot refrain, however, from remarking that Josephus must have forgotten that there is no appreciable tide at the head of the Mediterranean, when he says "the sea itself, upon the flux of the tide from without, came into the city and washed it all clean!" There is enough here, however, besides the name, to convince us that the historian is actually speaking of this place. It was doubtless the south-western mole which Herod named Procymatia—wave-breaker. Exactly where the tower of Drusus stood I am at a loss to decide.

In one respect these remains of the first century of our era are extremely interesting and important. They present the best criterion by which to judge architecturally of other ruins. A moment's

[1] Ant. xv. 9, 6.

examination will prove that Herod built with materials furnished to his hands by ruins of a city older, and, I believe, more magnificent than his own. The great number of granite columns built into his moles speaks of an antecedent and wealthy metropolis, with splendid temples, which had been overthrown long before Herod began his work. Nor do I believe that Strato's Tower — as the place was then called,



MOLE AND HARBOR OF CÆSAREA.

and which he changed to Cæsarea—was the original name. That is of foreign derivation, given by the Romans, while the columns and other relics speak of Greek or Phœnician times and architects. Josephus says that Herod built a temple on this southern mole, and a splendid theatre near the harbor, and without the city, on

the south side, an amphitheatre capable of holding a vast multitude of people. All have disappeared. Those tall buttresses, which make the most show of any part of the present ruins, evidently belonged to a Christian church, possibly of Crusader times.

Cæsarea has the misfortune to be inseparably associated with the incipient causes and first outbreaks of that dreadful war in which Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Jewish nation were destroyed. Herod, by erecting heathen temples and theatres, and placing idol statues in the city, greatly displeased the Jews, and the disputes between them and their idolatrous fellow-citizens finally became so bitter and exasperated that they rushed blindly into open revolt. One of the first acts of the bloody tragedy was the massacre of twenty thousand Jews in this city by the Greeks. The whole Jewish nation then flew to arms, and ceased to fight only when they ceased to exist as a people.

How comes it that Cæsarea has for many ages been utterly deserted? It is, I believe, the only considerable city on the coast that has been thus absolutely forsaken.

Several things conspired to work out this result. The mole being overthrown, the harbor became utterly unsafe; not a single ship could ride securely in it. This destroyed her commerce. The aqueducts broken, there was no longer an adequate supply of water; and this gone, the surrounding country relapsed into its natural state of a barren desert, and the sand, constantly accumulating from the sea, buried up every green thing. Thus solitary in itself, it early became infested with robbers, so that no one could live here in safety, and thus it continues to this hour; nor is there much reason to hope that it will again become an important city, for it has not a single natural advantage.

It is time to seek our tent at Tawâhîn ez Zerka, an hour to the north-east of us. Let us follow the line of these lofty aqueducts—two in one—by which we shall obtain a better idea of the ancient suburbs, and likewise observe their great size. They were carried along parallel to the shore for about two miles, and served as a defence against the sands of the sea, and the whole space on the east of them seems to have been occupied with buildings. We can see into the covered canals in many places; and the stories of the

natives, that a man could pass inside of them on horseback from the city to the mills of ez Zerka, do not seem to be incredible fables. They are in such preservation that it would not cost a large sum to clear them of the sand, and again bring the water to the harbor. It is not true, however, as some travellers assert, that ships frequently put in here to obtain water from these aqueducts, for they have been broken for centuries. Boats often call in summer to load with stones from the ruins, and many of the recent buildings in Jaffa and Acre are constructed out of them. I once spent a day here while my boat was being thus freighted for Jaffa, and such is the only trade carried on with this ancient capital of Palestine. Shepherds, who water their flocks from the well near the site of the southern gate, visit it by day; and robbers, by night, lie in wait to plunder any unprotected traveller who may chance to pass—which, however, is of rare occurrence, as comparatively few now follow this desolate coast, and none venture alone, if they can in any way avoid it.

Here are the mills, and, by taking the advice of the miller, our tents have been pitched in a very good position for defence. There is no disguising the fact that we are surrounded by robbers, and it will be necessary to keep a strict guard. We have time enough before sunset to examine this extraordinary locality. It appears that the river Zerka had here broken through the low rocky ridge which runs parallel to the shore, and in some remote age that opening was shut up by this powerful wall, thus raising the water twenty-five feet high. The wall is two hundred and thirty paces long and twenty feet thick, and the road still passes along its top—the grandest mill-dam I have ever seen. The water falls directly from the top on the wheels below. There are some eight or ten mills now in motion, others are in ruins, and at least twenty might be ranged side by side below the wall. It is this dam that causes the marsh of ez Zoar—the whole of which could be effectually drained by simply breaking it down, and many thousand acres of the richest land would thus be regained to cultivation.

The Zerka is undoubtedly the Crocodile River of the ancients, and you will be surprised to hear that there are now living crocodiles in the marsh at our side; but such is the fact. These millers

say they have seen them often; and the government agent, a respectable Christian, assures me that they recently killed one eighteen spans long, and as thick as his body. I suspect that, long ages ago, some Egyptians, accustomed to worship this ugly creature, settled here, and brought their gods with them. Once here, they would not easily be exterminated, for no better place could be desired by them than this vast jungle and impracticable swamp. I was delighted, on my first visit many years since, to find these creatures still here to confirm the assertions of Greek and Roman geographers. The historians of the Crusades speak of this marsh, which they call a lake, and also say that there were crocodiles in it in their day. If the locality would admit, I should identify this Zerka with the Shihor-libnath of Joshua xix. 26, for Shihor is one of the names of the Nile, the very home of the crocodile; but the river in question was given to Asher, and is probably the N'amân—the Belus of ancient geographers—and the marshes at its source are as suitable for this ugly beast as these of ez Zoar.

III.

CÆSAREA TO RAMLEH.

Nature's Call to Worship.—Marsh of the Zerka.—Crocodiles.—Paul a Prisoner at Cæsarea.—Ancient Itineraries and Geographers.—Strato's Tower.—Ride from Cæsarea to Samaria.—Bâkah.—Native Customs.—Hill-country of Samaria.—Numerous Villages.—Philistines.—Tellûl Abu Zabûrah.—Water-spouts.—Flying-fish.—Abu Zabûrah.—Derb el Kheît.—Nests of Field-sparrows.—Mukhâlid.—Watermelons.—Ants great Robbers.—Subterranean Granaries.—Sand-downs.—Shifting Banks of the Brooks.—Groves of the Stone Pine.—Richard Cœur de Lion.—Bedawîn Shepherds of Sharon.—Rose of Sharon.—El Haram.—Arsûf.—Apollonia.—Bridge over the 'Aujeh.—Population of Palestine in Ancient Times.—Census taken by Moses.—Limited Area of Palestine.—Density of the Population.—Comparative Cost of Living.—Manners and Customs.—Prophecy of the Mother of King Lemuel.—Modern Palestine.—Plain of Sharon.—Mirage.—Origin of the Philistines.—Beit Degân, Beth Dagon.—Renthieh, Arimathea.—Ludd.—Church of St. George.—Harvest Scene.—Lines of Ancient Traffic.—Women Grinding at the Mill.—Tût Shâmy, Damascus Mulberry.—Camp at the Tower of Ramleh.

April 10th.

THE hurry and bustle of an early start have crowded out our morning worship, but we can take a lesson from the works and ways of nature while the gray dawn grows into the full broad day.

> Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
> With charm of earliest birds.

The lark is already on high, saluting the first rays that gild the dappled east with his cheerful matin. All nature hears the call, and hastens to join the general welcome to the coming king of day; and yonder he comes, over the head of Carmel, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. Even the vegetable kingdom shares the universal joy. Notice the flowers, how they turn smiling to his ardent gaze, bend forwards in seeming reverence, throw open their pretty cups, and cast abroad their sweetest perfume. This silent adoration of ten thousand flowers is most beautiful and impressive,

and I have seen it nowhere else in greater perfection than upon the sacred plain of Sharon.

Now this powerful king of day is but the faint shadow of his Maker, the Sun of Righteousness; and when He rises with healing in his wings,[1] may we be ever ready to meet him with analogous welcome and superior joy. Let us even now listen to the many voices around us calling to prayer. "Oh come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."[2]

We have done well to commence our ride with the dawn, for it is a long one, and will be most fatiguing. He who goes not to bed will be early up, says an Oriental proverb, and so it has been with me. I can never sleep in such a place as this, and therefore merely wrapped my cloak about me, and sat down patiently to watch our boastful guard, for I never yet found them faithful through a whole night. Talking, smoking, and joking, they managed to stave off sleep until midnight, and then all except Hammûd gave up the effort. He held on for nearly another hour, humming to himself more and more drowsily, till finally his head subsided on his chest, and his song into a gurgling snore.

Lifting his gun quietly from his knee, I walked out on the ancient causeway, and set myself to count the stars, and listen to the sounds that startle the dull ear of night. I deemed myself familiar with every noise and note that mark the transit of those leaden hours: the surf's low murmur, dying out on the shore; the sobbing of the winds amongst the trees and rocks; the monotonous response of the night-hawk to his mate; the muffled flutter of the circling bat; the howl of the wolf; the jackal's wail; the bark of the fox, and the watch-dog's bay from the distant fold. To these and such as these I have listened with the listening stars many a time. But there was something additional to render my solitary watch upon that old dam strange, doubtful, and expectant. Above the clattering of mill-stones and the rush of water-wheels there came, every now and then, a loud splash and stifled groan. Did they come from the slimy crocodiles which crawl through this

[1] Mal. iv. 2. [2] Psa. xcv. 6, 7.

hideous swamp in search of prey? Ere long, however, my musings wandered off to more interesting themes. I recalled the day and night I spent among Cæsarea's broken walls and prostrate columns more than forty years ago. Fresh from scenes of war and earthquake, sickness and death in Jerusalem, I then felt a mysterious sympathy with these sad and forsaken ruins. Cæsarea is, in some respects, the most interesting site on the earth to the missionary. Here the Holy Ghost was first poured out upon the Gentiles as upon the Jews, and thus the middle wall of partition broken down. From this spot the glad tidings set forth to run among the nations, north, and south, and east, and west — west, far west — and, after eighteen centuries, from the New World, westwards, beyond the dream of prophet or apostle, returns the missionary of that Gospel to mingle his tears with the dust and ashes of this cradle of the Gentile Church.

How wonderful are the ways of God! In this place the greatest missionary that ever lived was shut up in prison two whole years, and at a most critical time in the history of the Church, when his presence and preaching seemed indispensable. One cannot help feeling that Paul made a mistake when he came here from Acre en route to Jerusalem. He should have listened to Philip's four prophetic daughters, and to Agabus, who "took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle."[1] But the lion-hearted apostle would not be persuaded. "What mean ye," saith he, "to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." And speedily and right nobly did he redeem his pledge.

Having escaped terrific mobs and horrible conspiracies at Jerusalem, he was brought back to this place in chains, and here held prisoner by Felix, that corrupt and tyrannical governor. How often he must have dragged his chain to the top of the castle during those two long years, and gazed on the green hills of Palestine, and out upon the blue sea over which he had sailed many times on messages of mercy to heathen nations along its distant shores. One

[1] Acts xxi. 8–13.

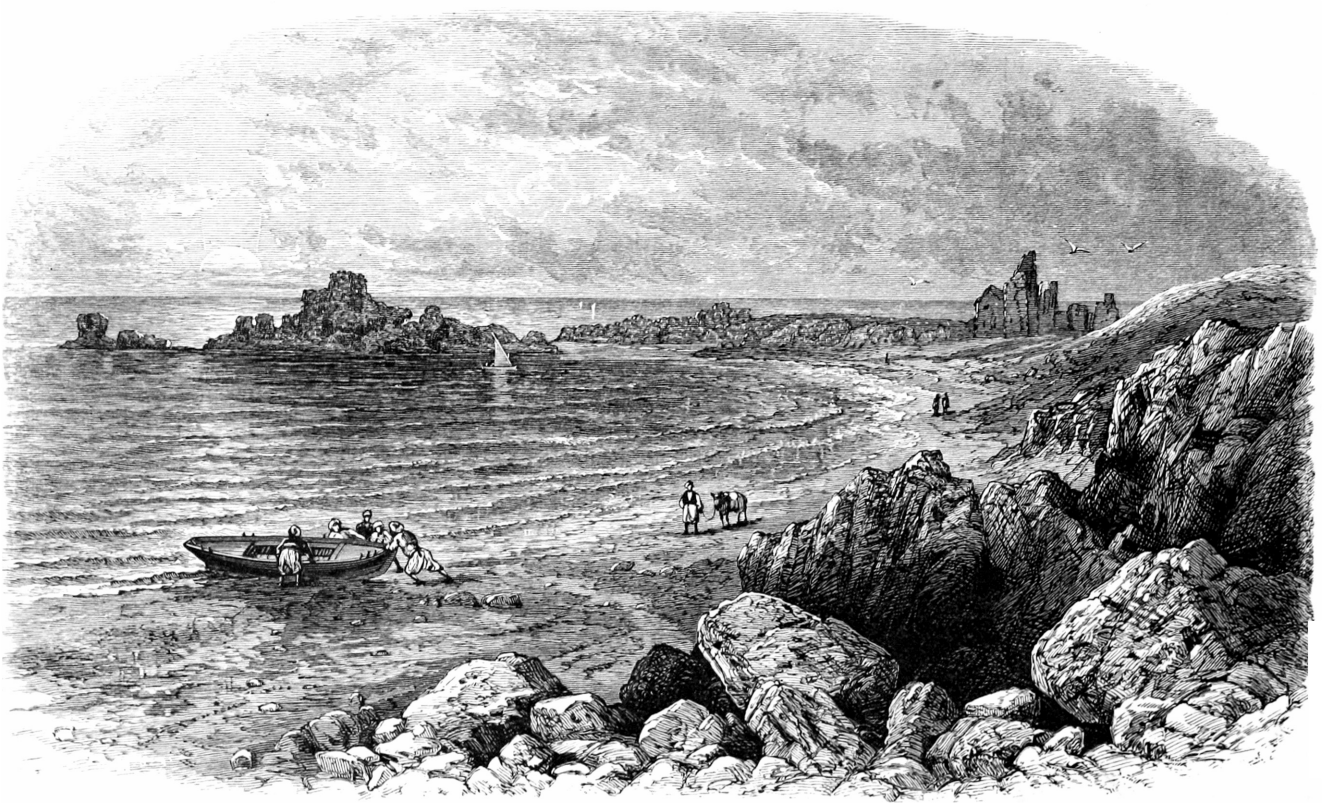
longs to know something of the musings and occupations of that wonderful man during the tedium of those many months. But inspiration is silent, and even tradition fails us. The supposition that he then superintended the writing of Luke's Gospel is a mere guess, with no historical basis.

We are again within Cæsarea's prostrate walls. Doubtless some of these mounds of rubbish mark the exact site of Paul's prison, and from this sandy margin of the harbor he stepped on board that ship of Adramyttium in which he sailed for Italy to prosecute his appeal before Cæsar.[1] Repeatedly have I passed over the same seas, and followed the apostle step by step in that tedious and unfortunate voyage. They evidently had a pleasant run to Sidon, where they touched the next day, and Paul was allowed to go on shore and refresh himself amongst his friends. The wind must have then hauled round to the west, for the ship could not pursue the direct course to Italy south of Cyprus, but ran north between that island and the Syrian coast, and then west over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia; working westwards in the teeth of the wind, it was a tedious and dangerous passage. But we may not follow that celebrated voyage any farther at present, nor longer linger here at Cæsarea; so take your last look at these remains of the city, and harbor, and sandy suburbs, and let us hasten after our luggage, now far ahead of us.

In passing from Cæsarea to Jaffa the ancient geographers and Itineraries stretched their lines from the one to the other, as though there was nothing worth attention in the twelve intervening hours. Nor were they much mistaken, for there is, perhaps, no ride of so many miles in any other part of Palestine more solitary and barren of historic interest. Strabo says, "After Strato's Tower there is a great wood, and then Joppa." The Roman road was evidently carried east of these sandy downs which lie along the shore, both to avoid them and also to find suitable places to throw their bridges over the rivers which enter the sea. Following that route there is first a dreary wood of dwarfish pines and tangled bushes, and then the long plain of Sharon.

Before taking leave of this interesting site, let us examine the

[1] Acts xxvii. 2.



KAISARÍYEH—CÆSAREA FROM THE SOUTH.

traces of a city on the south of it, whose remains appear to be much older than those of Cæsarea. These inlets along the rocky shore, I suppose, were the harbor of that primitive city which was called Strato's Tower before and at the time of Herod. It was somewhere in this vicinity, south of Cæsarea and near the sea, that Herod built his great amphitheatre, and these half-buried foundations may have belonged to that edifice.

According to the maps, the region eastwards of Cæsarea belonged to Samaria. It is impossible to accomplish everything in a single tour, but I should delight to pass through the country to Sebûstieh and Nâblus, and thence to Jerusalem. I fancy it would be more interesting than this long stretch of desolate sea-coast.

In some respects it would, yet the route hence to Samaria is singularly barren in Biblical sites. I can give you a brief résumé of that route. Starting from the broken buttress of Herod's harbor, it took ten minutes to force our way through the dense jungle of yellow daisies which covered the ruins of the ancient city. Our Bedawîn guides were careful to keep the animals in what was once a path, before it was hidden by the daisies, which were actually higher than the backs of our horses. They said the whole region was full of old wells, pits, and broken vaults; and not even they themselves would venture to penetrate the jungle for fear of falling into them. I was surprised at the extent eastwards of the ruins, which was clearly defined by the thicket of daisies. Beyond them are sandy downs, in some places loose and shifting; and in half an hour we came to a small brook, which ran into a large marsh called Hadaidûn, and thence into the Zerka. Both brook and marsh derive their name from a deserted village farther south. The marsh was crowded with buffaloes, cropping the coarse grass, and storks wading about in search of frogs and other prey. Turning southeast, we came, in an hour and a quarter, to oak woods, a continuation of the forests of Carmel, and in another hour passed out of them and descended to a brook called by our guide el Khudeiran, which gets its name from a large tell lower down towards the sea. In three and a half hours we crossed the great highway from the north to Ludd, Ramleh, Gaza, and Egypt. The plain of Sharon is here not more than five miles wide from east to west; but as

we rode over the hill near Bâkah the view southwards was boundless. In all that ride of five hours we did not pass a single village. Arabs and Kurds have possession of the entire region, and hence the numerous robberies along that route; but as we had the chief of the robbers and two mounted police of the government for a guard, we were not molested. Bâkah is a considerable village, where the district governor resides, and we had abundant opportunity to see the notabilities of the neighborhood. Around it are orchards of olive, fig, pomegranate, and other trees, and in the valley below are immense fields of onions. The only well is at least half a mile from the village, and women and girls, in merry groups, were passing to and from it all the day long, with tall black jars perched upon their heads. They were well clothed; and I noticed one, who appeared to be a Sit, surrounded by her maidens. She wore a scarlet-colored silk gŭmbâz over her other garments, with a profusion of native jewellery about her head-dress, but her feet were bare. She carried her jar like the rest, but somewhat coquettishly, at a slight angle, while her walk was proud and stately. It was evening, the time "when the daughters of the men of the city came out to draw water;"[1] and I was pleasantly reminded of Rebekah and Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's faithful steward, at the well near the city of Nahor, for many camels were kneeling around the troughs at the well. The women carry all the water, while the men lounge about, smoke, sip coffee, play with the mankalie or at the dama, with which games they are strangely fascinated. Some of the women were spinning thick strands of goat's hair, with which coarse sacks, bags, carpets, and tent-covers are woven. They use no spindle, but merely fasten the strands to a stone, which they twirl round until sufficiently twisted, when it is wound upon a ball, and the process is repeated over and over, in the most primitive manner possible. The men do the ploughing, for you never see a woman guiding the plough; but they follow after and drop in the seed—simsum, cotton, or "white corn"—in the furrow. They also assist in reaping, and drive the mowraj round the summer threshing-floor.

The rest of the day was quite broken up by horsemen coming and going in urgent haste, owing to reported raids of Bedawîn from

[1] Gen. xxiv. 13.

the plain of Esdraelon. The alarm, however, seemed to be groundless; and, after a quiet night, we started early for Samaria. The surrounding country is very fertile and thickly inhabited. From the top of a high tell I counted thirteen villages, and was told that there were many others hidden away in the retreating valleys. As none of them suggest Biblical sites, it would be useless to mention their hard-sounding names. Turning into the mountains east of Bâkah, we followed a long rocky glen through vast olive-orchards, past a place called ed Deîr, up a very steep ascent, and then down on the other side to 'Ain Ibta, a well-built town in wady Shaîr. This wady drains the region north, south, and east of Sebŭstieh, and passes across the plain to the sea, where it is called Abu Zabûrah. On this point the testimony of the natives was unanimous, but nothing except accurate surveys will determine the true course of the numerous streams that descend from the eastern mountains to the sea. We followed wady Shaîr all the way from 'Ain Ibta to Sebŭstieh, and the villages on the hill-sides are numerous and picturesque. The entire ride was over ground new to me, and therefore extremely interesting. The underlying rock is a white cretaceous limestone, with soft and hard strata interchanging in many places with surprising regularity. The soil in the valleys is surpassingly fat and fertile. I saw oxen passing through a field where nothing but their heads appeared above the waving wheat; and I myself rode along a path, the wheat higher on either side than the back of my horse. It is indeed "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive, and honey."[1]

The places of most interest north of the route to Sebŭstieh are Um el Fahm, a large and wealthy Moslem village north-east of Bâkah, Kefr Kûd, the Capercotia of the ancient geographers, 'Arrabeh, the turbulent seat of the 'Abd el Hady family, the great rivals of the Beit Jerâr of Sânûr for the government of this region. They and their partisans are almost always at war, and the villages are divided into hostile factions, ever ready for conflict and bloodshed. Tell Dothân, where Joseph was cast into a pit, and subsequently

[1] Deut. viii. 7, 8.

sold to Ishmaelite merchants, is nearly east of 'Arrabeh; and the ever-rebellious Sânûr is on the regular road from Sebŭstieh to Jenîn, a little north of Jeba'. I supposed that we were following the track of the ancient highway from Cæsarea to Samaria and Nâblus, but we saw no traces of such a road until 'Ain Ibta, nor was there any pavement visible between that village and Sebŭstieh. This entire region has been rarely visited by travellers, and was but little known until quite recently. And now let me remind you that our horses have, in the meantime, carried us over the border of Phœnicia into the territory of the Philistines.

According to the Biblical account, the Philistines came originally out of Egypt.[1]

Leaving that much-disputed question for the future, I will only remark that, as we traverse their country, we shall see that even the present inhabitants approach more and more closely to the Egyptian type in physiognomy, in costume, language, manners, and customs. Dr. Kitto has a long and labored article to prove that they were the Shepherd Kings expelled from Egypt. Others more competent must decide whether or not he makes good his hypothesis, but the mere supposition adds fresh interest to this people and to the country which they occupied.

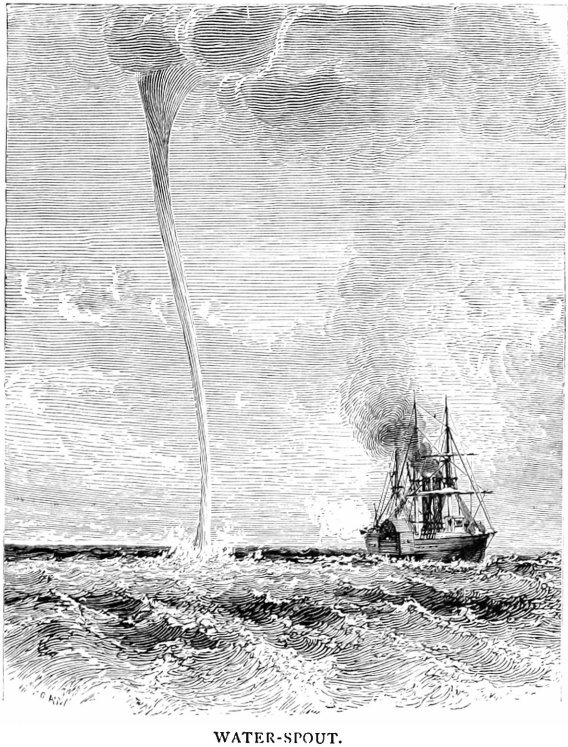
What are these high mounds ahead of us that overhang the sea?

They are called Tellûl Abu Zabûrah, and are one hour from Cæsarea. The sea has worn them half away, but on the top of this first one are some large columns which must have formed part of a temple, or possibly of a mausoleum. The spot is still used as a burying-ground by Arab tribes in this region. It commands a noble view of the sea westwards, and of Strabo's "ingens sylva" in the interior. Much of this wilderness is covered by shifting sand, which has overflowed the country, and whose presence is easily explained. The rock of the shore is a friable sandstone, constantly washed to pieces by the waves, and the loose sand is driven inland by the west winds. This holds good along the entire coast wherever sand encumbers the plain, but here it is unusually abundant and troublesome. We shall have high hills of it on our left, and

[1] Deut. ii. 23; Amos ix. 7.

this soft beach to wade through for two full hours yet; therefore, put on the garment of patience, and plod steadily onwards.

There is always something to amuse and instruct in this country. Look at those dark clouds, which hang like sackcloth over the sea along the western horizon. From them, on windy days, are formed water-spouts.



WATER-SPOUT.

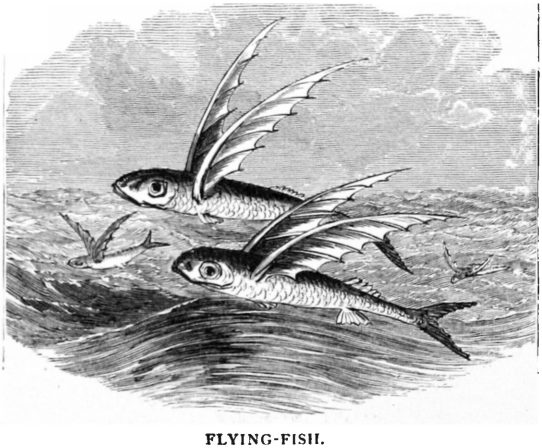
I have already noticed several incipient spouts, lengthening downwards from their lower edge.

These remarkable phenomena occur most frequently in spring, but I have also seen them in autumn. They are not accompanied with much rain, and between the dark stratum above and the sea the sky is clear and bright. Here and there fragments of black vapor, shaped like long funnels, are drawn down from the clouds towards the sea, and are seen to be in violent agitation, whirling round on themselves as they are driven along by the wind. Directly beneath them the surface of the sea is also in commotion by a whirlwind, which travels onwards in concert with the spout above. I have often seen the two actually unite in mid-air and rush towards the mountains, writhing and twisting and bending like a huge serpent, its head in the clouds and its tail on the deep.

They make a loud noise, and appear very frightful. "Deep

calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me," saith the Psalmist, when his soul was cast down within him.[1] But, though formidable in appearance, they do very little injury. I have heard of only one instance in which they proved destructive, even to boats, though the sailors are afraid of them. As soon as they approach the shore they dissolve and disappear.

That kind of water-spout which bursts on the mountains, generally in the dry months of summer, does immense mischief. In a few minutes the wadies along its track are swollen into furious rivers, which sweep away grain, olives, raisins, and every other produce of the farmer. I have known them to carry off and drown flocks of sheep and goats, even cows and horses, and their owners also.



FLYING-FISH.

This is one of those days when the sea is just sufficiently disturbed to set the flying-fish in motion, and I have already seen several flocks of them frightened out of their proper element to try their glossy wings in the air. They are generally supposed to do this to escape some ravenous fish that is pursuing them, but they often start up in shoals before native boats. Their flight is always short and spasmodic, and when their web-wings become dry they instantly collapse, and the poor little aeronauts drop into the water like stones. I have had them fall into my boat when attempting to fly over it.

How melancholy is this utter desolation! Not a house, not a trace of inhabitants, not even shepherds, to relieve the dull monotony. Was it thus when Peter came from Joppa to Cæsarea?

[1] Psa. xlii. 7.

The coast itself was, doubtless, what it is now; but the road could not have been so utterly deserted. Cæsarea was then a great capital and commercial emporium; and this now solitary track was crowded with multitudes hastening to that centre of business, pleasure, and ambition.

Did Paul travel this route to and from Jerusalem?

I suppose not. The Roman road, even to Joppa, probably passed inland from Cæsarea, and united with the great highway which continued along the plain southwards. From Antipatris a branch road led off to the south-east, through the mountains, to Jerusalem. Paul was brought down that way by the Roman soldiers, and it was the direct route which he would pursue unless turned aside by some special call.

Here we come to what is called Minât Zabûr, or Harbor of Abu Zabûrah; and around this small inlet was once a village of some size, as is indicated by the quantity of broken pottery scattered over the surface. This is an infallible sign of an ancient site. If there ever were any but mud hovels here, however, every stone has been carried away, or has dissolved to sand and dust. The river Abu Zabûrah enters the sea a short distance ahead of us; but, as this has been a remarkably dry season, we can, doubtless, cross on the beach, though once, when I passed this way in 1833, I had to make a long detour into the interior over these sand-hills, and finally got across with difficulty. It is celebrated for quicksands and bottomless mud; and it was partly to avoid such impracticable rivers that the Romans carried their highways down the interior, for it was their system never to make a road where they could not construct a bridge.

We must allow our horses to drink at the ford, for it is a long stretch to the next brook. Here is a shepherd with his flock; and Hammûd exclaimed, when he saw him, "El hamdu lillah shûfna ensân" — Praise be to God! we have seen a man. He may be thankful also that the Bedawy is one and that we are many.

These cliffs, below which we have been trailing our slow and weary march since crossing Abu Zabûrah, are very singular geological specimens; absolutely perpendicular, composed of very thin strata; not horizontal, but crumpled, twisted, and bulging out in

all possible angles and shapes, like dog-eared pasteboard in a book-bindery.

Yes, and the same extraordinary formation continues almost to Jaffa. The cliffs are called Derb el Kheît, probably because they stretch in a straight line for so many miles. But our horses are becoming exhausted with this deep sand; let us therefore turn into the country, and pass over these sand-hills to Mukhâlid, forty-five minutes to the south-east of us. There has been a fight there this week between the villagers and the Bedawîn, as I was told at the mills last night; but we are a strong party, and they will not venture to molest us. There we shall find water, take our lunch, and refresh our weary horses.

What sort of birds are these which make such a noise amongst the trees and bushes?

They are field-sparrows, and this is one of the largest congregations of them I have seen. The trees and even the bushes are stuffed full of their nests; and these hawks that are soaring about cause all this alarm and hubbub amongst the sparrows. I saw something like this on the Hûleh, only the birds are ten times more numerous here; in fact, they seem to be without number. They live upon the wild oats which cover these sand-hills as if sown by the hand of man. I once found an immense colony of sparrows settled in the bushes along the northern margin of the plain of Gennesaret. The gregarious instinct which leads them to unite and build their nests at breeding-time in such populous communities is shared by other birds. The crows or rooks select the vast cane-brakes north of lake Hûleh. The beautiful wŭrwâr—bee-eater—burrows in great numbers in the soft earth-banks at the ancient site of Tarichæa, near the outgo of the Jordan from the lake of Tiberias; and many other kinds of birds exhibit the same instincts.

These nests are so numerous and so low that one might easily gather a peck of their tiny eggs, and unfledged younglings, with mother-hen and all, could they be of any use.

Ay; but by such wanton robbery you would violate both the letter and the spirit of the Mosaic law.

To what precept do you refer?

You doubtless remember that God commanded his servant

Moses to protect them, and others like them, with the shield of his divine law. "If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young: but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days."[1] Notice now the comprehensive specifications of this precept, by which you are forbidden to molest these nests. Though not on the ground, they are in the trees. You must in nowise take the dam, and you do not want either the eggs or the young, so all must be left. Notice also the weighty sanction appended to the precept—prosperity and long life to the obedient, with the contrary calamities clearly implied upon the transgressor.

Michaelis thinks that this precept was designed mainly to protect from extinction noxious and mischievous birds, but it is plainly indicated that they were such as persons might desire to use. In its spirit the law includes all birds, and no doubt this, like many other prohibitory commands, was intended to cultivate sentiments of humanity and habits of gentleness and compassion. There is something revolting and barbarous in the destruction of both mother and young, and those who do so wantonly will acquire cruel and savage dispositions, fitting them for the commission of any kind of atrocity. It will not be well with such robbers, nor will they prolong their days upon the earth.

Now we have gained the summit, see what a splendid prospect opens upon the eye. The great plain of Sharon stretches southwards quite beyond the range of vision, while the mountains of Manasseh and Ephraim, on the east, crowded with villages, picturesquely perched upon their many-shaped declivities, bound the horizon in that direction. Below us, to the south-east, is Mukhâlid, and most welcome to man and beast, for we have been riding five hours through deep sand, and are quite fatigued.

On the evening of the 5th of April, 1833, I arrived at this village from Tantûra, and slept under this identical old sycamore, which the west wind has forced to spread its branches down the

[1] Deut. xxii. 6, 7.

hill to the east. How little of the romance of that first journey through Palestine can I now get up, with all the appliances and luxuries of modern travel! Without tent, canteen, or even cook, sleeping under trees, hedges, or rocks, as it happened, I passed from Beirût to the Dead Sea, and back through the interior by Nâblus, Nazareth, and Tiberias. But there was more romance than common-sense in the matter, and before that first summer was over I lay on my bed for many weeks, consumed by that low, nervous, Dead Sea fever which has proved fatal to so many Syrian travellers.

Mukhâlid is famous for watermelons beyond almost any village in Palestine, and vast quantities are taken by boat to Beirût, and other towns along the coast.

Are these melons the abattachim of Egypt, the remembrance of which augmented the murmurs of the Israelites in the wilderness?[1]

In all probability the same. The Arabic name is only a variation of the Hebrew, and nothing could be more regretted in the burning desert than these delicious melons, whose exuberant juice is so refreshing to the thirsty pilgrim. It is among the extraordinary eccentricities of the vegetable kingdom that these melons, so large and so full of water, should flourish best on such soil as this around Mukhâlid. Into this dry sand the vine thrusts its short root, and that in the hottest season of the year; yet a thousand boat-loads of this most juicy melon are gathered from these sand-fields for the market every summer. The leaves themselves must have the power of absorbing moisture from the heavy dews of the night. The villagers are telling our people that, for fear of the Bedawîn, they have not dared to plant their more distant fields this spring, and therefore there will be few of their melons in the city markets, which bit of information has stirred the wrath of the muleteers, and they are heaping maledictions upon those robbers—upon their heads, their eyes, their beards, and everything else pertaining to them. And really one feels a sort of sympathy with them, for I am conscious of an intense dislike of these Bedawîn, nor have I any patience with them. Our lunch is over, and we must ride steadily and fast, for it is yet several hours to el Haram, where we are to find the tents pitched for the night.

[1] Numb. xi. 5.

Look well before your horse's head, or you may fall into one of these open-mouthed cisterns by the road-side.

I see; but what are they for? Not to hold water, certainly, for there is no way in which they could be filled.

They are wells or cisterns for grain. In them the farmers store their crops after the grain is threshed and winnowed. These cisterns are cool, perfectly dry, and tight. The top is hermetically sealed with plaster, and covered with a deep bed of earth, and thus they keep out rats, mice, and even ants—the latter by no means a contemptible enemy.

I read lately, in a work of some pretension, that ants do not carry away wheat or barley. This was by way of comment on the word of the wise man, that the ant "gathereth her food in the harvest."[1] What have you to say of the criticism?

That it is nonsense. Tell it to these farmers, and they will laugh in your face. Ants not pilfer from the floor and the granary! They are the greatest robbers in the land. Leave a bushel of wheat in the vicinity of one of their subterranean cities, and in a surprisingly short time the whole commonwealth will be summoned to plunder. A broad black column stretches from the wheat to their hole, and you are startled by the result. As if by magic, every grain seems to be accommodated with legs, and walks off in a hurry along the moving column. The farmers remorselessly set fire to every ant city they find in the neighborhood of their threshing-floors. Solomon does not say that the ants lay up store for winter, but that they gather their food in the harvest,[2] which they most diligently do, as any one may see who will take the trouble to look. Immediately following this praise of the ant the Seventy make Solomon ascribe similar wisdom and diligence to the bee. Two verses are added to the Hebrew text, which are thus translated: "Or go to the bee, and learn how industrious she is, and what a magnificent work she produces, whose labors kings and common people use for their health, and she is desired and praised by all. And though weak in strength, yet, prizing wisdom, she prevails." The doctrine is good, even though the text is not found in the Hebrew, and the ancients often quote the passage.

[1] Prov. vi. 8. [2] Prov. vi. 6–8.

Similar cisterns, you say, are found all over the country. Are they mentioned or alluded to in the Bible?

The custom is, doubtless, ancient, and was introduced into Spain from this country through the Carthaginians of North Africa. They seem to be referred to by those ten men who said to Ishmael, "Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey;" and thus they saved their lives from his treacherous designs.[1] Such cisterns not only preserve the grain and other stores deposited in them from insects and mice, but they are admirably adapted to conceal them from robbers. I saw people storing away grain in cisterns far out in the open country between Aleppo and Hamath, and they did this to hide it from the government tax-gatherers. It is quite dangerous to come upon a deserted site full of open cisterns and wells, especially at night, as I have often found. Frequently they are entirely concealed by the grass, and the path leads right among them. They must always be dug in dry places—generally, as here, on the side of a sloping hill. In a wet country they would not answer, but in dry climates stores have been found quite fresh and sound many years after they were thus buried. The farmers also resort to various expedients to keep the grain from injury. One of the most common is to mingle quicksilver with oil, or with the white of an egg, and rub it in well with the wheat. This will preserve it free from insects of all kinds. Joseph in Egypt must have understood how to preserve grain, at least for seven years; and I suppose that in ancient times, when cities and fortresses were liable to very long sieges, it was of the utmost importance to know the best methods of preserving their stores. Askelon is said to have been besieged twenty-eight years, and of course the people must have had stores of provisions laid up and well preserved. That this was common is implied in the parable of the rich fool, who built greater storehouses and laid up provisions for many years.[2] If there had been no such storehouses in the land, and the custom of laying up grain for many years was unknown, the terms of the parable would have lacked verisimilitude, a defect in construction which attaches to none of our Lord's sayings.

[1] Jer. xli. 8.

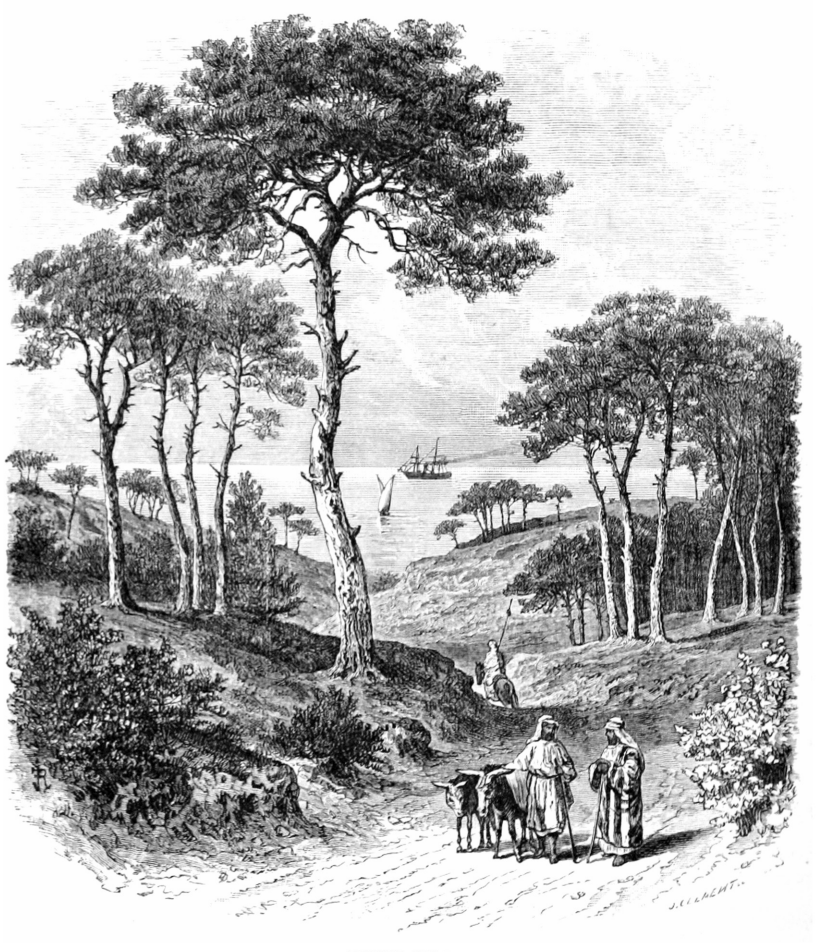
[2] Luke xii. 18, 19.

Are we to suppose that these vast downs have really been formed by sand blown in from the sea-shore? All the way from Cæsarea we have had them.

Yes; and here they are at least three miles broad and several hundred feet high; and they continue, with only partial interruptions, far down the coast beyond Gaza towards Egypt. They are all the work of the winds and waves, acting in the same manner through countless ages. The sea is slowly wearing away the underlying rock, as we have seen in the cliffs along the shore, and the new-made sand is being driven farther and farther inland. If this process goes on long enough, the entire plain will be buried under this slow-creeping desolation. There are parts of the coast where this has actually been accomplished, where the sandy deluge has reached nearly to the foot of the eastern mountains, leaving only a narrow strip of fertile soil between them. These shifting banks greatly perplex the brooks which cross the plain, for, not being sufficiently powerful to keep their channels open during summer, they are often dammed up at the mouth, and form large marshes along the very margin of the sand. We shall encounter one of these a short distance ahead of us. Strong, permanent streams like the 'Aujeh maintain their right of passage at all times, and have done so in all ages. The 'Aujeh, in fact, effects an entire break in this line of sand-hills; but, south of Jaffa, the weaker and less permanent brooks are constantly shut up during summer, and, when swollen by winter rains, flood the country, until they can force open a channel to the sea.

The plain has evidently been buried deep under this sand long ages ago, for here are pine forests usually found growing upon such formations. These are amongst the finest specimens we have in Palestine, though every sandy ridge of Lebanon and Hermon is clothed with them, and often of a much larger growth. They are rarely seen on the mountains of Palestine, because that peculiar sandy formation is not found there. This tree the Arabs call snubar, and in my opinion it is the Hebrew berosh, concerning which there is so much confusion in the various translations of the Bible. In the English it is generally rendered fir, but many modern critics think that it should be cypress. I, however, suppose that berosh

is the generic name for the pine, of which there are several varieties on Lebanon. The cypress is rarely found there, but pine everywhere, and it is *the* tree used for beams and rafters. Arz is the distinctive name for the cedar, berosh for the pine.

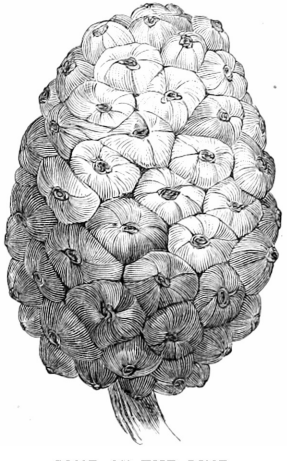


STONE-PINE.

This tree bears a large and compact cone, from which is obtained the nut of the market. This cone, when ripe, is gathered by the owners of the forests; and when thoroughly dried on the roof, or thrown for a few minutes into the fire, it separates into

many compartments, from each of which drops a smooth, small nut. The shell is very hard, and within it is the kernel, which is much used in making various preparations of rice, and also in many kinds of sweetmeats.

The variety of pine which we saw north of Mukhâlid, and in which the field-sparrows have made their nests, is the pinus orientalis, which is also found all over Lebanon, but it never grows tall, and is but little used for building purposes or in the carpenter's shop; and the same is true of all other kinds in this country, except the stone-pine.



CONE OF THE PINE.

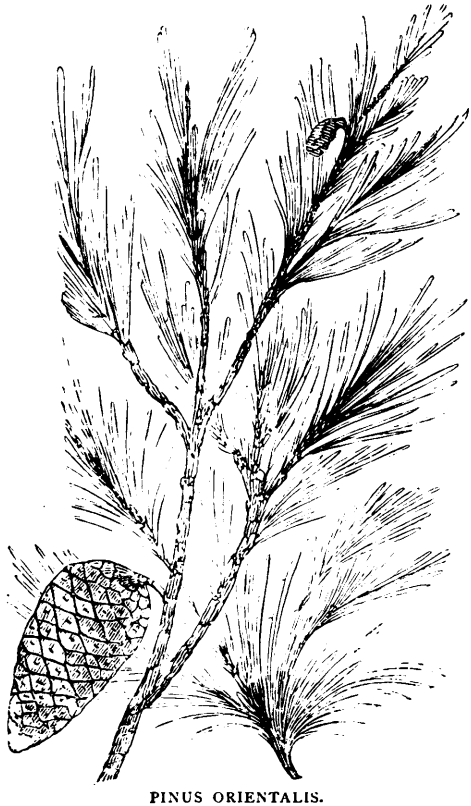
Here is one of your sand-perplexed brooks, with its accompanying marsh, I suppose?

Yes; it is called Nahr Fâlik. On the shore near its mouth, some distance farther south, is Arsûf, and from it the river sometimes takes that name. You observe that the banks of the river are shaded with a dense jungle of the mop-headed cane called babeer, like those which cover the marsh at er Râs. By keeping up the bank we shall find an easy ford near some old mills, where the river breaks through a ledge of rocks and enters this verdant vale. It has taken an hour and a half from Mukhâlid, and another hour and a half will bring us to el Haram.

We have ridden through that dreary region to-day where the army of Richard Cœur de Lion was so embarrassed and distressed during its march from Cæsarea to Jaffa, in the autumn of A.D. 1191. It appears to have taken five days to reach the region of Arsûf, the army being continually harassed by the Saracens and Bedawîn. On the sixth day a tremendous battle was fought near Arsûf, and the Saracens were defeated. The victorious Crusaders spent the Sabbath on the battle-field, offering masses and burying the dead. Monday they crossed the 'Aujeh and entered Jaffa, where they tarried some days for rest and refreshment. This celebrated march was made in September, and the army suffered terribly, not only

from incessant skirmishing with their enemies, but also from scarcity of water and extreme heat.

After a week of such marching through deep sand and treacherous bogs, the weary Crusaders must have revelled with intense delight in the fruitful and fragrant gardens of Jaffa. The contrast even now between those gardens and this melancholy wilderness is extreme. We have not seen a single human dwelling since leaving Mukhâlid.



PINUS ORIENTALIS.

The only inhabitants are Bedawîn shepherds, whose tents are hid away amongst the bushes in retiring valleys. They bear a bad character, and this neighborhood is unsafe for the solitary traveller.

Isaiah says that Sharon shall be like a wilderness, and this has become a sad and impressive reality.[1] And so these flocks of the Bedawîn shepherds fulfil the prophecy, "Sharon shall be a fold of flocks."[2]

The broad vale which stretches from Carmel southwards to this distance and a great deal farther, seems always to have been celebrated for its flocks and herds. David appointed one of his officers, Shitrai the Sharonite, over the herds that fed in Sharon.[3]

By-the-way, we have skirted this plain for so many miles without meeting any of those roses or lilies about which Solomon, in his "Song of Songs," sings so sweetly:[4] "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys."

[1] Isa. xxxiii. 9. [2] Isa. lxv. 10. [3] 1 Chron. xxvii. 29. [4] Song ii. 1.

There are wild roses enough in some parts, with their accompanying thorny thickets; and, if the Hebrew word khŭbbaizly could be interpreted by the Arabic khŭbbaizeh, malva, I have seen thousands of Solomon's roses on Sharon; and, before you protest against degrading the poetic rose to the marsh-mallow, let me tell you that certain kinds of mallows grow into a stout bush, and bear hundreds of beautiful flowers. However, I will not contend for the identity of khŭbbaizly and khŭbbaizy, for that would exclude the rose from the Bible altogether—a calamity which the critics seem determined to bring about at any rate, for some of them maintain that the khŭbbaizly is the narcissus, others that it is the asphodel, and some translators call it the lily.

But yonder are the tents—a sight most agreeable to weary travellers like ourselves.

April 11th.

What enticed you abroad so early this morning?

I wished to take a view of our immediate surroundings, for it was late when we arrived last night, and I could not see much of this place. The position of el Haram is very fine. Mukâm en Neby occupies the crest of a ridge which breaks sheer down to the shore, two hundred feet below, and from it the outlook over the sea of Jaffa is vast and impressive.

Who was this Neby?

The full name of the place is el Haram 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim, but who this son of 'Aleim was history does not record. The Mukâm, or tomb, sacred to his memory, is the first conspicuous object that the traveller sees from the deck of the steamer after leaving Jaffa for Beirût. There is much uncertainty in regard to the ancient name of this place. In the Itineraries, classic geographers, and ecclesiastical notitia, no city is mentioned between Cæsarea and Jaffa except Apollonia. William, Archbishop of Tyre, and other annalists of the Crusaders, speak only of Arsûf, as does also Abulfeda, the celebrated Arabian geographer. Whenever the archbishop refers to Arsûf, he is careful to identify it with Antipatris, and this was the current opinion until comparatively recent times. No one mentions el Haram, and neither of the three names is found in the Bible, but I think this is the true site of Apollonia. The

name Arsûf is now applied to an inconsiderable hamlet some two hours farther north.

As we have another long day's ride before us, Sâlim has placed our breakfast outside the tent, that it may be struck at once, and the mules loaded without delay. We shall overtake the caravan at the bridge over the 'Aujeh, near the mills at el Mirr. Meanwhile let us ride out and examine the traces of what may have been Apollonia's fortifications. I once arrived at el Haram from Tantûra, on the evening of April 29th, 1856, and pitched just where our tents stood last night. It was a fatiguing ride of more than eleven hours.

Here are the outlines of an ancient city, and the wall seems to have enclosed a quadrangular area about half a mile long and some forty rods wide. This is but a small space for a city, but it may have been surrounded by extensive suburbs.

The citadel probably occupied that singular cliff on the northwest which overhangs the sea, and is quite isolated by a deep chasm. The top was entirely covered by a castle now in ruins; but when in good condition, and held by a competent garrison, it must have been almost impregnable.

Josephus mentions Apollonia along with Strato's Tower and other cities on this coast as in the possession of the Jews.[1]

You say it is three hours from here to Jaffa. Is there anything of interest along the road?

Very little indeed. Immediately south of the Mukâm the road drops steeply down to the shore, which it follows for two hours through deep sand, with nothing to attract the attention until you reach the 'Aujeh. Having forded that formidable river, another hour brings the weary traveller to the city. The only remarkable thing along the ten miles of solitary sea-beach that I remember was the immense accumulation of small shells cast up by the waves in long lines, like windrows in a meadow, and in places at least two feet high.

How distinctly the ships appear in the harbor of Jaffa from this high ridge of el Haram, where we are now! The way in which they roll and pitch reminds me of my recent experience in that port. I can scarcely believe that they are ten miles distant from us.

[1] Jos. Ant. xiii. xv. 4.

This is one of those days when the atmosphere is extremely transparent, and we shall find it oppressively hot. Let us now follow our company. Every village has a road to the mill, according to an Arab proverb; and we, therefore, need only keep the mill-path to el Mirr, and it will bring us to the bridge over the 'Aujeh near those mills.

Much of the country through which we have been rambling for a week appears never to have been inhabited, or even cultivated; and there are other parts, you say, still more barren. How could a land as small as Palestine, and with so much waste territory, support the vast population assigned to it in the Bible?

The doubt implied by your question arises in the mind of almost all visitors to this country, and it may be well thus early in our travels to give it careful consideration.

The subject is many-sided, and the questions connected with it manifold, and too comprehensive to be fully examined now and here; yet I hope we may be able to meet and answer all reasonable objections to the Biblical accounts without any very protracted discussion. This, however, cannot be done by denying the main statements which give color and force to the objections.

A fair analysis of the census taken by Moses on the plains of Moab, as recorded in Numbers, chap. xxvi., makes the total number of the nine and a half tribes who passed over the Jordan under Joshua to have been about two millions. There may have been even more. These must find their homes west of the Jordan, and this, it is argued, was impossible in a country so small as Palestine proper. Here again the main facts cannot be denied. Palestine is a small country—the average breadth not over fifty miles, and the length, "from Dan to Beersheba," one hundred and fifty miles, more or less. This gives seventy-five hundred square miles for the entire territory. But at least five hundred square miles must be deducted for those parts of the sea-coast held by Philistines, Phœnicians, and other nations. The utmost, therefore, that can be claimed for the Hebrew inheritance west of the Jordan is seven thousand square miles. It must further be admitted that a considerable part of the country on the south and on the west side of the Dead Sea must always have been comparatively sterile and

unproductive. The question then comes to this, Could such a country sustain two millions of inhabitants at the time, and under the conditions implied in the Biblical accounts? To this question we may safely give an affirmative reply. For, in the first place, the conditions of the problem require only two hundred and eighty-five inhabitants to the square mile—a density of population which has been far exceeded in some other countries even in modern times. Belgium has about three hundred and thirty, North Holland four hundred and fifty-five, and South Holland four hundred and sixty-nine inhabitants to the square mile. In the second place, it is a fact not contested, I believe, that the mode of living in ancient times was much simpler than now, and hence much less was required to maintain an individual then than at present.

I know it is the common opinion that it cost far less to live in ancient times than it does now, and this is probable; but still I should like to have this supposition confirmed by adequate data, so far, at least, as they illustrate the Biblical statements in regard to the population of the Holy Land. If it required only half as much to support a man then as it does now, this fact would largely modify the whole question. But how can this be established?

The essentials are food, clothing, and shelter; and there is good reason to believe that the average Hebrew, in the olden time, could and did live on far less than what is required for the average European or American of the present day. They were an agricultural people and a pastoral—a nation of small farmers, just as the inhabitants of Palestine now are. The ordinary food of both was also substantially the same—bread, olives, oil; butter, milk, and cheese from their flocks; fruits and vegetables from their orchards and gardens, and meat on rare occasions. Their fertile plains furnished wheat in abundance; and although "it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone," yet it has been the main dependence in this country, and is so still.[1] On their hills flourished the olive, the fig, and the vine, and over the rough mountains and waste places grazed their sheep and goats. Thus each man's "lot" furnished the food for himself and his household. Their clothing, also, was of the simplest kind, home-made, coarse, and strong—

[1] Matt. iv. 4.

a long, loose shirt, bound to the person by a girdle of cloth or leather, and a woollen 'aba, or cloak, to wear when not at work. Of course, their tailors' bills were insignificant, and their washing nothing. Their habitations were small, cost little labor, and less money. They had neither chairs, tables, bedsteads, nor other furniture to occupy the space; and the entire household lived and slept in the same room, on the floor, and with little change in their ordinary clothing. Many Biblical incidents imply these and similar customs.

I remember that the reason why a man's garment, left in pledge, must be returned ere the sun went down, was "that he may sleep in his own raiment;"[1] and the excuse given by the friend why he could not rise and lend his neighbor the loaves he needed, was that his children were with him in bed; and the parable implies that such was the common practice.[2]

There are numberless minute and incidental allusions throughout the entire Bible which confirm the fact that the mode of living amongst the ancient Hebrews was extremely simple and inexpensive.

After the establishment of the monarchy and the introduction of foreign luxuries, living must have become far more costly, especially in Jerusalem and other large cities.

No doubt it did, but their territory was then greatly enlarged; and at the same time commerce and manufactures of various kinds sprung up, and diffused amongst the people a new spirit of enterprise and activity in all the industries by which the resources of a country are multiplied. There must have been many a virtuous woman in the households of Israel even before Solomon wrote his proverbs, or her exquisite character could not have been portrayed: "She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. She

[1] Exod. xxii. 26, 27; Deut. xxiv. 10–13. [2] Luke xi. 5–9.

looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."[1] Facts must always precede the proverbs that are based upon them; and such characters as that described by the mother of King Lemuel must have been somewhat numerous in Israel before "the prophecy" could have been written. With such inhabitants any country would prosper, more especially a land like this, "which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."[2] We must not judge Palestine from what a thousand years and more of Moslem misrule has made it. It is a good land, abounding in all the natural elements of soil and climate necessary for great productiveness.

More than forty years ago a traveller called upon me in Beirût, and in the course of conversation he frankly stated that his chief object in visiting this country was to prove, by accurate investigation, that it never could have supported the number of inhabitants ascribed to it in the Bible, and that, therefore, those statements were false, and those who made them untrustworthy. After wandering over the country for many weeks he returned to Beirût, and, with equal frankness, acknowledged that he had entirely failed. He had been led to believe that Palestine was a hopelessly barren country, but had found it quite the reverse. This general subject, he said, had long been his special study; and his survey of this land had convinced him that it contained, in a remarkable degree, all the natural resources of inexhaustible fertility. And so it does, as we shall see hereafter.

I am glad that such is the fact, for our six days' ramble through this deserted region has not been particularly satisfactory or assuring. It is indeed gratifying to find that we may accept with confidence the Biblical statement in regard to the population of the country, their manners, and their customs.

The subject has at least served to relieve the monotony of our morning's ride. We have overtaken the mules, and yonder is the

[1] Prov. xxxi. 13–31. [2] Deut. xi. 12

bridge at the mills of el Mirr. From there we shall proceed directly to Ludd, where are matters both interesting and Biblical to engage our attention.

How many hours have we yet to ride to-day?

That depends upon the rate of travel. It is about three hours to Ludd, and three-quarters of an hour farther to Ramleh, where we are to find our tents.

This is truly a magnificent plain, and towards the south apparently boundless.

In its whole extent it certainly is the largest on the west of the Jordan, for it includes the entire territory of the Philistines. Far from being a flat, dead level, it is agreeably varied by long swells, growing into sandy ridges, and even rocky tells and hills, affording sightly positions for villages, which are more numerous and populous than on other plains in this region, and surrounded often by olive and fruit orchards, which impart an air of cheerfulness rarely seen elsewhere in Palestine.

Yonder, on the plain to the south-east of us, is a beautiful mirage. This optical illusion is often so perfect that even the experienced traveller finds it difficult to believe that he is not approaching an actual lake of transparent water. Dr. Wilson tells us that the name for mirage in Sanscrit means "the thirst of the antelope," and nothing could be more poetical. I once gave chase to a flock of gazelles on the plain of Tireh, south-east of Aleppo. The day was intensely hot, and "the antelopes" made direct towards a vast mirage, which covered the whole eastern horizon. To me they seemed to be literally leaping through the water, and I could see their forms below the surface, and reversed, with the utmost distinctness. No wonder they were deceived, for even their pursuer was utterly confounded. But the pursuit of a mirage is like chasing the rainbow, which retreats as you advance, and can never be overtaken. The Arab name is serab, and it is doubtless to this deceitful phenomenon that Isaiah refers, where the promise is that this serab shall become a real lake.[1] Our translators have missed the exact meaning of this most emphatic figure. Serab is not "parched ground," but a shimmering, tantalizing phantom of a lake. Sale, in

[1] Isa. xxxv. 7.

his Korân, chap. xxiv., translates serab by vapor: "The works of unbelievers are like the vapor serab in a plain, which the thirsty thinketh to be water, until, when he cometh thereto, he findeth it nothing." Muhammed meant the mirage, and gave the proper name for it.

The peasants of this part of Sharon differ strikingly from those in the north. Do you suppose that there is sufficient Philistine blood in their veins to account for their peculiar physiognomy?

There is enough of the Egypto-African about them to explain all peculiarities of color, contour, and character. I think that the Philistines came from the neighboring coast of Africa, perhaps from Lower Egypt, though Josephus seems to place Caphtor, their ancient home, higher up the valley of the Nile. There is plausibility in the theory which identifies the Shepherd Kings, who conquered Lower Egypt about the time of Abraham, with the Philistines. They may have been a great roving race of Bedawîn until the time of that conquest. By remaining masters of the Egyptians for so many generations they acquired much of their civilization; and, when finally expelled, they came north into Palestine, drove the inhabitants from the coast and the plain of Sharon, and there built their cities, carried on agriculture and commerce, and became a powerful confederacy, quite able to protect themselves from their neighbors. This seems to me best to agree with the various notices of them found in the Bible, in the fragments of Manetho, the history of Josephus, and with all other hints which can be gathered up from ancient authors, the traditions of nations, and the architectural indications derived from the monuments which still exist. I cannot think that the Philistines emigrated originally from Crete, or from Cappadocia, or even from Cyprus. Such theories show the skill and learning of their inventors more than they illustrate the true origin of nations. Who can believe that those lands were so overstocked with inhabitants, at that very early age after the Deluge, as to require, or even to admit of, such an emigration? And if they had been forcibly expelled from either of those countries, would there not have been some tradition of such a great fact in their national history?

If the Cherethites, repeatedly mentioned in the history of David

and subsequently, were really Cretans, they may have been foreign mercenaries, hired to be the guards of the king and his executioners; and there may even have been a small colony of them settled at the time in the south of Philistia, as seems to be implied in 1 Samuel xxx. 11–15, where the Amalekites who burned Ziklag are said to have invaded their country. In 2 Samuel viii. 18, xx. 23, they are associated with the Pelethites, who are conjectured to have been Philistines; and in 2 Samuel xv. 18 both are mentioned, along with the Gittites, another alien tribe, as forming part of David's army of six hundred men that went with him out of Gath. It is certainly remarkable that David, at that early period in his career, should have had so many foreign soldiers in his service.

To which of the tribes did this part of the plain belong?

The border over against Jaffa was assigned to Dan, and Ephraim was north of it. The 'Aujeh may have been the boundary between them. The Jews do not seem to have obtained possession of this neighborhood, at least not until the time of David. There, to the south of us, on the road from Jaffa to Ludd, is Beit Degân, the house of Dagon, which was probably held by the Philistines, and named from their famous god.

It is useless to endeavor to remember these non-historic names which our guide is rattling off at such a rate; so we will turn our horses southwards, and pursue the regular road towards Ludd. There, on the left, is the village called Renthieh; and, as Dr. Robinson remarks, the name is sufficiently like Arimathea to be assumed as the site of that place. From what Jerome says, it seems to me probable that this was really the city of "Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, who went in boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus."[1]

We are now approaching Ludd, the village where Peter was when summoned to Jaffa on account of the death of Dorcas. It has a double history—that of the place, and that of the Church of St. George. It belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, and, according to 1 Chronicles viii. 12, "the sons of one Elpaal built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof." Ono has been identified with a ruin

[1] Mark xv. 43.

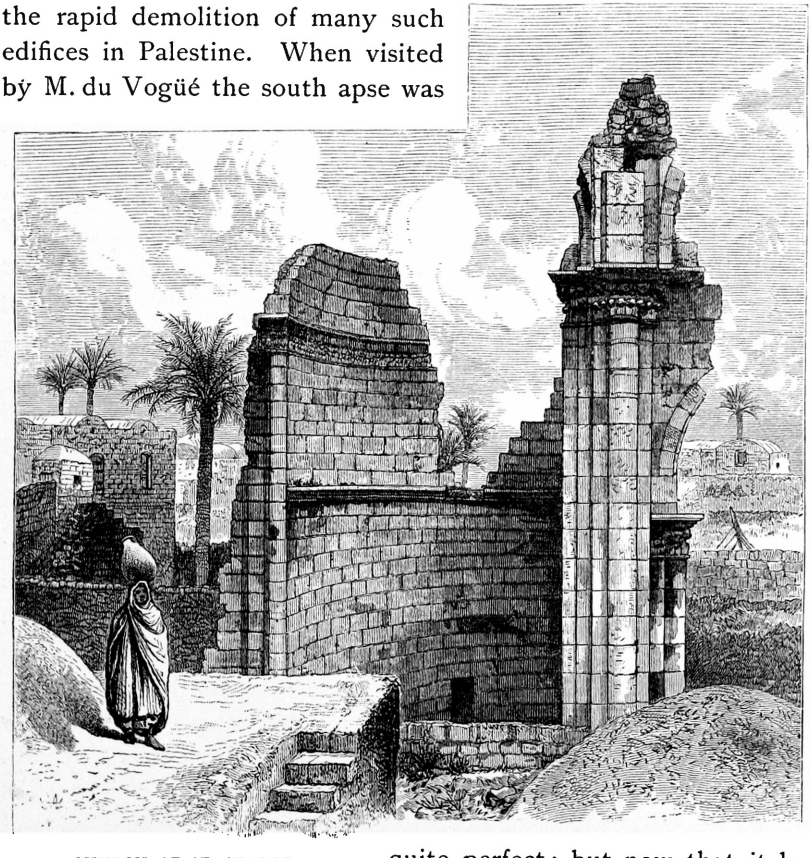
called 'Auna, a few miles northwards of Ludd, but "the towns thereof" are not known, unless the Saron, mentioned in Acts ix. 35, was one of them. Saron is nearly the same as Sharon, the name commonly applied to the whole surrounding plain, and either may have received it from the other. Ludd has never quite disappeared from history, but its record is largely one of desolation and blood. It shared in the national calamities that culminated in the Babylonian captivity. After the return it was re-occupied by Benjaminites, as appears from Ezra and Nehemiah.[1] No doubt Ludd participated in all the misfortunes that befell the country from the wars and invasions of the Macedonian kings of Antioch; and when their authority was superseded by that of Rome, the oppression and misrule were greater than ever. The cruel Cassius ravaged the country, and sold the inhabitants of Ludd and several other towns as slaves. Cestius Gallus came here from Antipatris, and, finding the men all absent, he burned the town, and then continued his march by Beth-horon to Jerusalem.

After the destruction of Jerusalem and the general dispersion of the Jews, many of them found a home in this region, and Ludd and Jamnia are specially mentioned as centres of rabbinical learning. Christianity was introduced here by the apostle Peter, and Ludd early became the seat of an important bishopric. In the Onomasticon and early ecclesiastical notitia it is called Diospolis, but this foreign title ultimately fell off, and the original name was resumed. Under this name it figures largely in the history of the Crusades, especially in connection with the Church of St. George. The Saracens had destroyed the edifice on the approach of the Crusaders, but it was soon rebuilt by them, and became the splendid cathedral of a Latin bishopric. It was subsequently destroyed by Saladin, who feared that it would be occupied by Richard of England as a fortress. Again it was rebuilt, and, after many succeeding demolitions and restorations, it gradually fell into the ruined condition which all travellers in this country for the last three centuries have described. The Moslems long ago built a mosk in the western end of it, and lately the eastern part has been made into a Greek church. No one can look upon the re-

[1] Ezra ii. 33; Neh. xi. 35.

mains of this edifice without being struck with the air of grandeur which it bears, and deeply impressed by its long and eventful history. The material of which it was built is a hard yellowish limestone, that takes a fine polish and is very durable.

Lieutenant Conder, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, remarks that "This church is an instance of the rapid demolition of many such edifices in Palestine. When visited by M. du Vogüé the south apse was



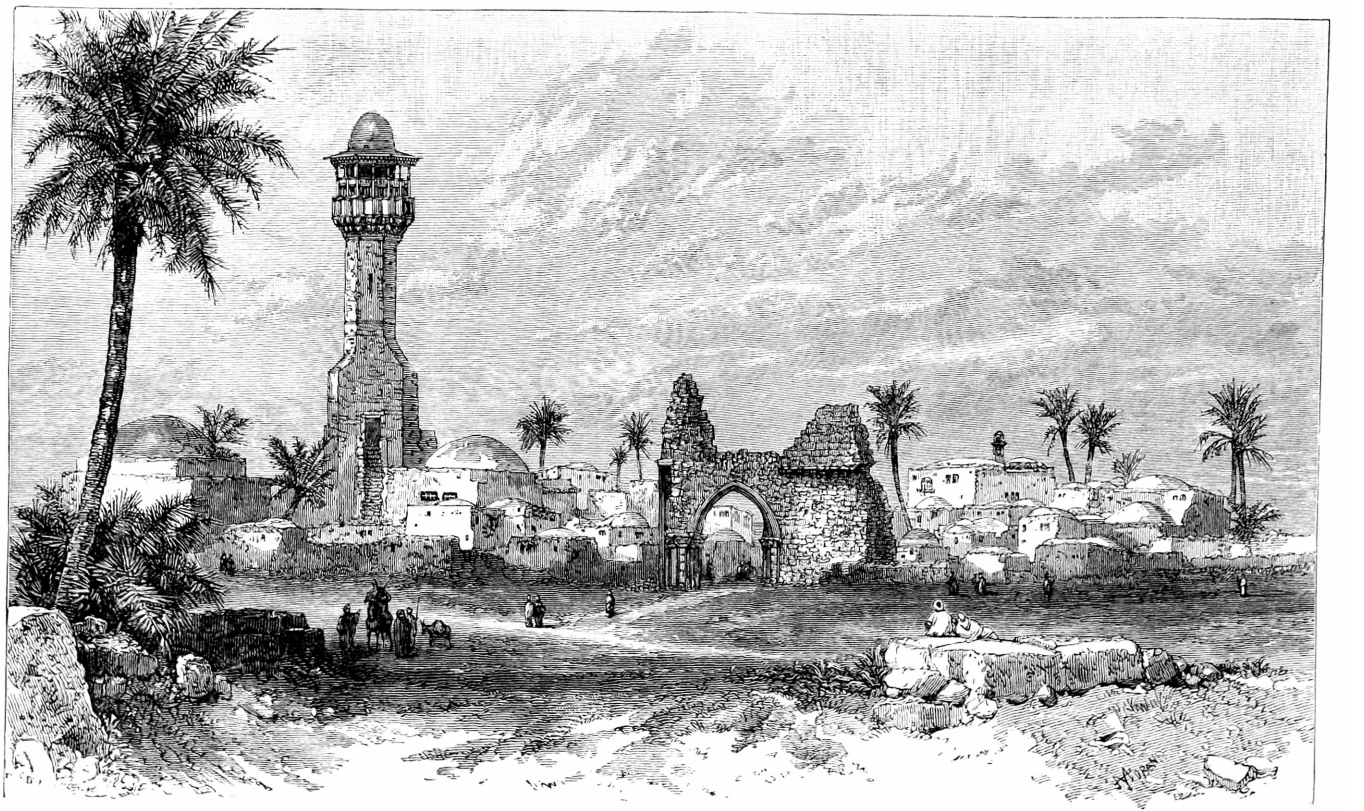
CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE.

quite perfect; but now that it has been restored by the Greeks, and a modern church made out of the first two bays of the nave and north aisle, the southern one has been quite destroyed, and I did not remark any traces of its apse." Lieutenant Conder found in the mosk a pier and pillar belonging to the south aisle, and he supposes that the total length of the edifice was within one hun-

dred and thirty or one hundred and fifty feet, and the breadth about eighty feet. The date of the present ruins, he thinks, may be some time in the twelfth century.

Ludd is a flourishing village of some two thousand inhabitants, embosomed in groves of olive, fig, pomegranate, mulberry, palm, sycamore, and other trees, and surrounded every way by a very fertile neighborhood. The inhabitants are evidently industrious and thriving, and the country between this and Ramleh is being occupied by their flourishing orchards. Rarely have I beheld a rural scene more delightful than this presented when I rode from Ramleh hither through the fields in early harvest-time. A thousand reapers and gleaners were abroad and busy when the morning sun shot his first rays down through the olive-trees, which half hid, half revealed the merry harvesters—men, women, and children—the first reaping, the second gleaning, and the children at play, or watching the flocks and herds, which were allowed to follow the gleaners. But no description can reproduce such a tableau.

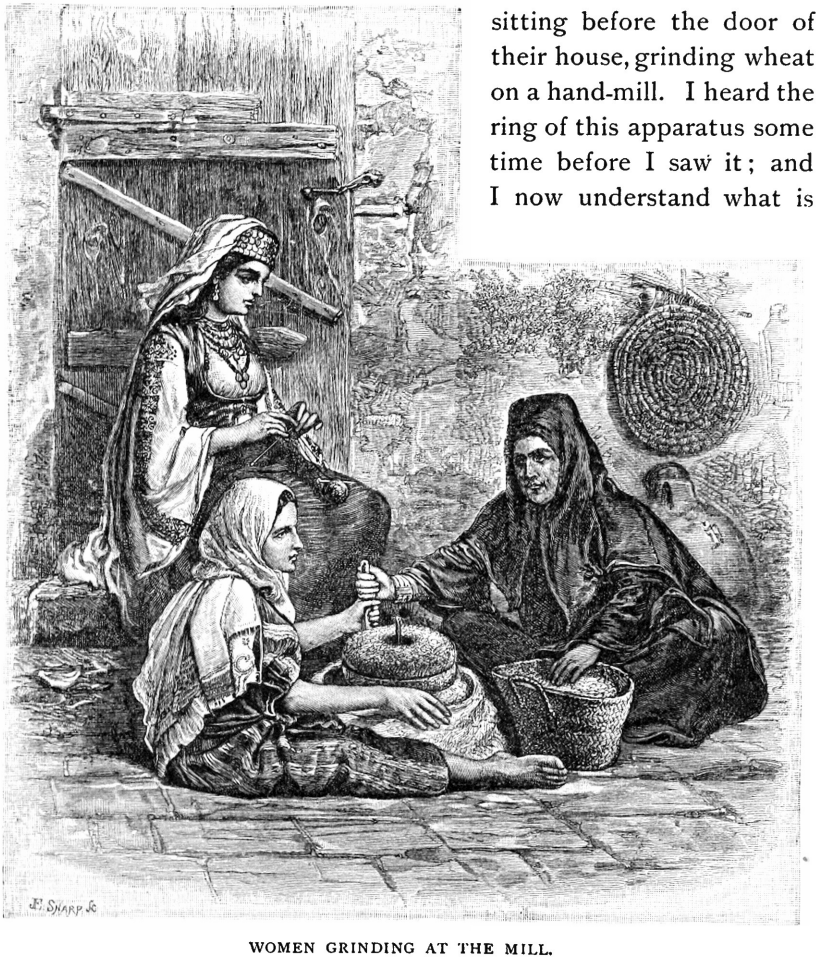
Like most other towns in this country, Ludd has seen better days, and that, too, in times not very remote. There are remains of large and well-constructed buildings mingled in with the modern huts, and several extensive soap factories are now also deserted and falling to decay. These times of recent prosperity were probably when Jaffa was abandoned on account of the pirates, for in those days the trade of Syria and Palestine was carried on over land. Large caravans came from Aleppo through the Bŭkâ'a and Wady et Teim; from Bagdad and Damascus across the Jaulan, by Jisr Benat Ya'kôb; and from the Hauran by Beisan; all meeting near Lejjun, the ancient Megiddo, passing down by Antipatris to Ludd, and thence to Ramleh, Gaza, and Egypt. That was the time when the long lines of khâns, caravanserais, and castles were needed and maintained. But no sooner did the sea, freed from pirates, offer a cheaper mode of conveyance than this entire system was abandoned, and commerce sought the nearest ports along the coast to its destination. Hence all these khâns have gone to ruin, and those great highways are deserted. Many other towns besides Ludd and Ramleh have lost by this change of route, and the cities on the coast have gained in equal if not greater proportion.



LUDD—LYDDA.

Let us ride through the village to get a better idea of a place which has figured so largely in Jewish, Macedonian, Roman, Saracenic, Frank, Arab, and Turkish dynasties.

This little circuit has afforded me a beautiful illustration of Scripture. Two women were sitting before the door of their house, grinding wheat on a hand-mill. I heard the ring of this apparatus some time before I saw it; and I now understand what is



WOMEN GRINDING AT THE MILL.

meant by the preacher when he says, "The grinders cease because they are few; the sound of the grinding is low."[1] Jeremiah also saddens his picture of Israel's desolation by Nebuchadnezzar with

[1] Eccles. xii. 3, 4.

the prediction that "the sound of the millstones" should cease.[1] And upon Babylon, whose king stilled the voice of the grinding in Jerusalem, John denounces the like desolation: "The sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee."[2]

From this on southwards through Philistia there are no mill-streams, and we shall not cease to hear the hum of the hand-mill at every village and Arab camp morning and evening, and often deep into the night. When at work, two women sit at the mill facing each other; both have hold of the handle by which the upper is turned round upon the nether millstone. The one whose hand is disengaged throws in the grain, as occasion requires, through the hole in the upper stone, which is called el rukkâb—the rider—in Arabic, as it was long ago in Hebrew. It is not correct to say that one pushes it half round, and then the other seizes the handle. This would be slow work, and would give a spasmodic motion to the stone. Both retain their hold, and pull to or push from, as men do with the whip or cross-cut saw. The proverb of our Saviour is true to life, for women only grind.[3] I cannot recall an instance in which men were grinding at the hand-mill. It is tedious, fatiguing work, and slaves or servants are set at it.[4] From the king to "the maid-servant that is behind the mill," therefore, embraced all, from the very highest to the very lowest inhabitants of Egypt.[5] This grinding at the mill was often imposed upon captives taken in war. Thus Samson was abused by the Philistines,[6] and, with Milton for his poet, bitterly laments his cruel lot:

> To grind in brazen fetters under task,
> Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill with slaves.

What is the foundation for the comparison, "Hard as a piece of the nether millstone?"[7] Is the lower harder than the upper?

Not always. They are often both of the same porous lava, brought from the Hauran; but I have seen the nether made of a compact sandstone, and quite thick, while the upper was of lava, probably because, from its lightness, it is the more easily driven round with the hand.

[1] Jer. xxv. 10. [2] Rev. xviii. 22. [3] Matt. xxiv. 41. [4] Isa. xlvii. 2.
[5] Exod. xi. 5. [6] Judg. xvi. 21. [7] Job xli. 24.

What tree is this, mingled with the olive and the almond and loaded with a pale green berry?

That is the tût shâmy, the Damascus mulberry. It is grown for its fruit, not for the silk-worm. Pass this way in the middle of May, and you will find these trees bending under a load of berries so exactly resembling the largest blackberries in America that you could hardly distinguish them from each other. There are more of these Damascus mulberry-trees here than I have seen elsewhere, and they yield their glossy black fruit more abundantly than in other places. It has a sharper acid than that of the ripe blackberry, and, when eaten in large quantities, is unhealthy. It is one of those fruits now found all over Palestine which is not mentioned in the Bible; and the same remark applies to the prickly-pear, which flourishes in such impenetrable thickets around these villages.

It has taken just forty-five minutes to come from Ludd to Ramleh, and a pleasant ride it is. We will now incline a little to the right, pass round to the west of Ramleh, and camp near the tower which overlooks the whole country, where we may enjoy the rest of the Sabbath in quietness and peace. Here we cross the road from Jaffa. Observe that large open cistern in ruins to the south of it. There are many vaulted cisterns between it and the tower, and other indications that this vicinity was once either the seat of Ramleh itself or of some more ancient town. These cisterns may be almost of any age, and a city at this place would have had them, of course. In Muhammedan times we can find an adequate cause for them in the fact that there were here large khâns for the accommodation of the trading caravans which passed this way into Egypt.

IV.

RAMLEH.

Tower at Ramleh.—Subterranean Vaults.—Ascent of the Tower.—Extensive View from the Top of it.—Arimathea.—Ramleh.—Church of St. John.—Tell Jezer, Gezer.—Bilingual Inscription at Tell Jezer.—Modin.—Tombs of the Maccabees.—Biblical Sites on the Road from Ludd to Jerusalem.—Kefîr, Chephira of the Gibeonites.—Merj Ibn 'Omier, Valley of Aijalon.—Tibneh, Timnath-serah.—Inheritance of Joshua.—Sepulchre of Joshua.—Oriental Superstitions regarding Sacred Tombs.—Oak at Tibneh.—'Amwâs, Emmaus.—Nicopolis.—Beit Nûba.—Significance of Ancient Biblical Sites.—A Learned Pundit.—Testimony of the Land to the Truth of the Book.

April 12th.

SALÎM and Abd Allah have gone to Jaffa to procure some things for our journey which they failed to purchase before we started for Cæsarea.

We can well afford the detention, for we have here a very pleasant camping-ground at which to prolong our rest, and may spend the day examining the ruins and studying the topography of the surrounding country. The remains of these ancient buildings around us are unique and quite surprising. I attempted to penetrate into one of the large vaults beneath the court, but my one candle served only to make darkness visible, and to draw around me a swarm of disgusting bats. I then climbed to the top of this noble tower, and was delighted with the vast prospect, but wanted some one to name and explain the almost numberless sites that dot the plain and the slopes of the eastern mountains above it.

The tower had various names—White Mosk, White Tower, Tower of the Forty Martyrs, and, by the Moslems, Mukâm el Arb'ain Mâghâzy, Tomb of the Forty Champions. The mukâm is in the great central vault, and on one of my visits this large quadrangular court was crowded with devotees assembled to honor the

memory of those champions. In Crusading times there were probably similar gatherings here in honor of the martyrs supposed to be buried in one of the subterranean vaults. There may be no foundation for any of these traditions, yet the fact that buildings so large and expensive, with such vast underground vaults, were erected here, seems to require something antecedent to them which rendered the spot peculiarly sacred. The Arabic inscription over the entrance to the interior stairway of the tower, bearing date A.H. 718, establishes the fact that this record was placed there at that time, but Muhammedan rulers often insert slabs with pompous inscriptions over entrances to buildings which they did not erect. There are many such vaunting records on castles, temples, and churches older than the era of Muhammed; and the architects of this country are so skilled in these insertions that the forgery cannot readily be detected. I am inclined, therefore, to ascribe to some of the forsaken sepulchres, and broken cisterns found all through the olive-orchards hereabout, a date earlier than that of the existing Saracenic buildings, and the same to the tower itself. That the Moslems did destroy Christian churches at Ramleh is certain, and in doing this it would be quite natural to leave the tower standing, to serve as a minaret to a mosk, which, after their usual custom, they erected at or near the same site. The confused tradition of such events, mingled with fables of various ages, may, therefore, have had some foundation in fact. Dr. Robinson has a long and valuable epitome of these historical and traditionary notices; and, though we may not always fully sympathize with his depreciation of ecclesiastical tradition, nor feel anxious to strip all these cherished sites of their sacred associations, yet we can never fail to be instructed by his learned researches.

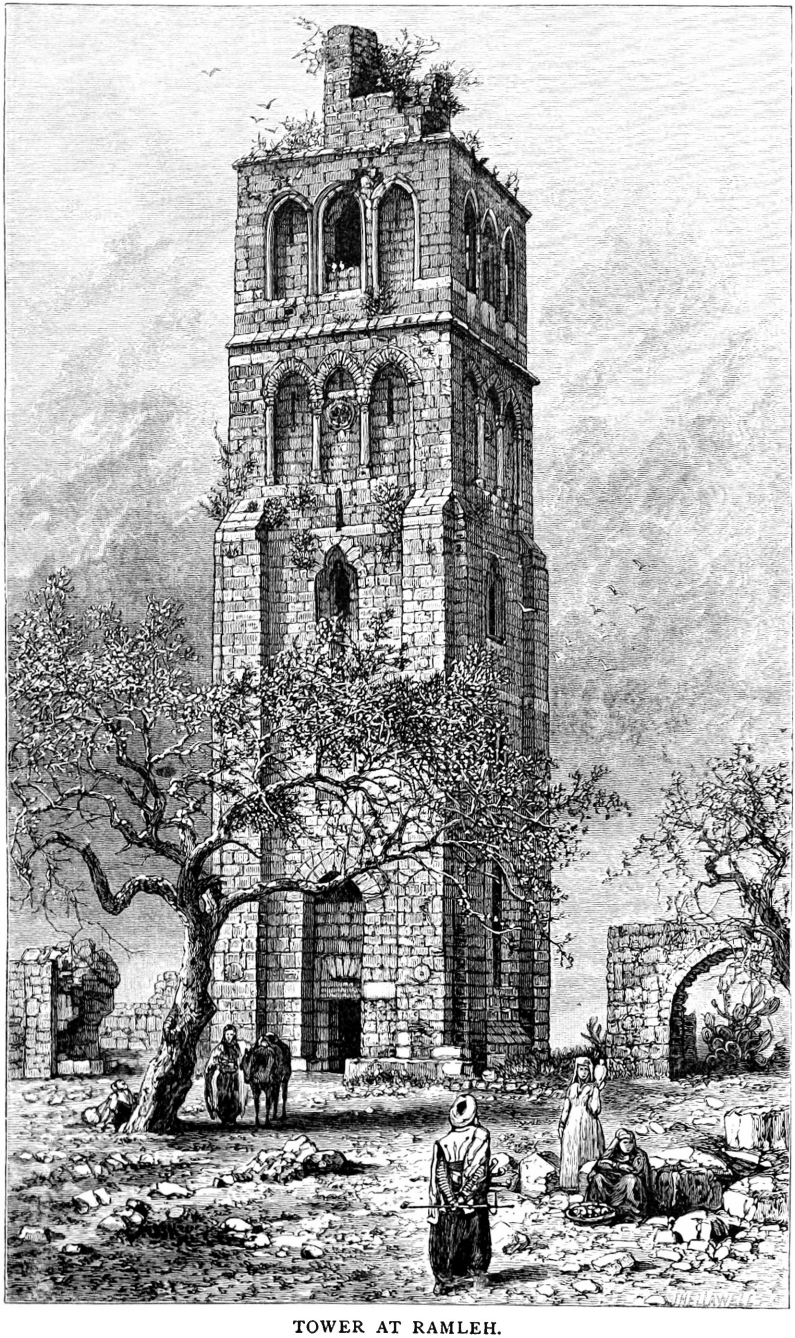
The vaults beneath the area enclosed by these buildings are in themselves, and apart from all historical questions, very remarkable. The one under the south side is about one hundred and fifty feet long, forty wide, and twenty-five deep. The roof is sustained in the centre by a row of nine square columns. The cistern on the west end is nearly seventy-five feet square and twenty deep, and the roof is supported by a double row of columns. The third is parallel to the first, which it also resembles in its details. Besides

these there are smaller cisterns, so perfect, even yet, as to hold water. These great vaults, plastered with hard stucco, are dry, and may have been used as storehouses or khâns for the caravans; but if so, the case is unique, for there is no other example of the kind in Syria, so far as my knowledge extends, and no reason can be assigned why resort should have been had to such expensive subterranean magazines in Ramleh alone. In other khâns the magazines were built round a hollow square enclosed by the exterior walls, nor do I believe that these vast vaults were constructed for that purpose.

Let us now enter and ascend the tower by its winding stairs of one hundred and twenty-six steps. The entire height cannot be much less than one hundred feet. In July of 1834, after this tower had been rudely shaken by an earthquake, which cracked nearly all the houses in Ramleh, and threw down many, I ascended to see if it had been injured; but it stood precisely as before, not a rent or crack from top to bottom, and thus it has stood a hundred earthquakes uninjured. It is twenty-five feet square at the base, and diminishes by graceful offsets, dividing it into different stories, with various-shaped windows and architectural embellishments. The summit has been accommodated with a round tower and balcony, to fit it for the muezzin of the mosk; but this is obviously a modern addition to the original structure, and most of it has been shaken down by those earthquakes which have had no effect on the body of the tower.

Mejr ed Dîn ascribes the building of the tower to Nâsir Muhammed Ibn Kalâwun, Khalif of Egypt. He appears to have begun the work A.D. 1310, and finished it in eight years. The style of architecture, though Saracenic, differs from most minarets erected by Moslems, and in cases where they resemble this they are generally attached to mosks which were originally Christian churches.

At the time I spoke of the whole of this country was in revolt against Ibrahim Pasha and Muhammed Aly of Egypt. I was shut up in Ramleh for many anxious days, and often came to this lofty lookout to watch the movements of the opposing forces with a heavy heart, for my family was in Jerusalem — the only Franks there, with one exception—and the city was in the hands of the



TOWER AT RAMLEH.

rebels. After returning from one of these sad and solitary watchings I wrote in my journal as follows: "The view from the top of the tower is inexpressibly grand. The whole plain of Sharon, from the mountains of Judæa and Samaria to the sea, and from the foot of Carmel to the sandy deserts of Philistia, lies spread out like an illuminated map. Beautiful as vast, and diversified as beautiful, the eye is fascinated, and the imagination enchanted, especially when the last rays of the setting sun light up the white villages which sit or hang upon the many-shaped declivities of the mountains. Then the lengthening shadows retreat over the plain and ascend the hillsides, while all below fade out of view under the misty and mellow haze of summer's twilight. The weary reapers return from their toil, the flocks come peacefully to their folds, and the solemn hush of Nature shutting up her manifold works and retiring to rest, all conspire to soothe the troubled heart into sympathetic repose. At such an hour I saw it once and again, and often lingered until the stars looked out from the deep sky, and the breezes of evening shed soft dews on the feverish land. What a paradise was here when Solomon reigned in Jerusalem, and sung of the 'roses of Sharon!' Better still will it be when He that is greater than Solomon shall sit on the throne of David his father, for 'the mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."[1]

> 'Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time,
> And bring the promised day.'"

Is there reason to believe that Ramleh is the Arimathea of the New Testament?

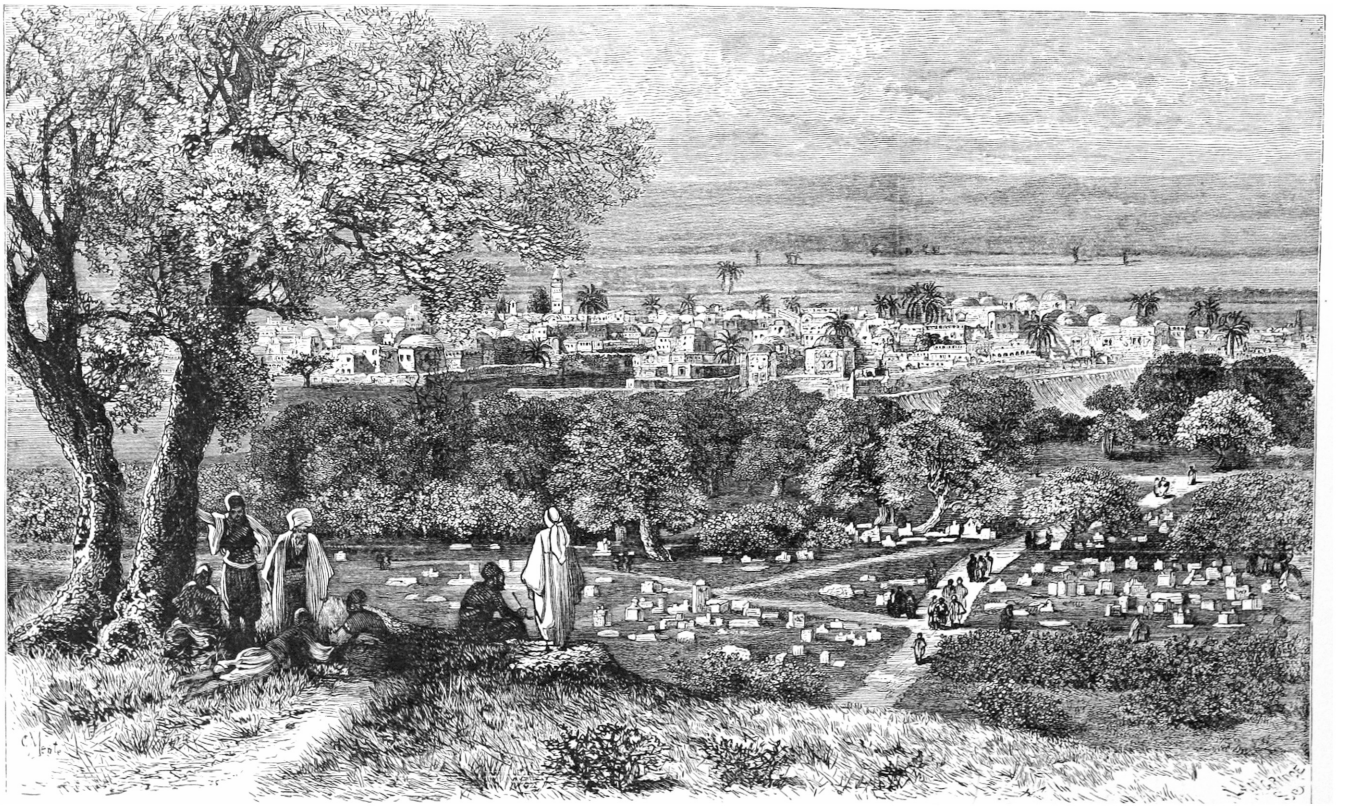
I am unable to decide the question, because I cannot be certain that both Eusebius and Jerome do not speak of it as the Arimathea of Joseph. They must have had better opportunities for correct information than we can procure. Some understand Jerome to mean this place when he speaks of Arimathea as being near to Diospolis—that is, Ludd; but he may have had in mind Renthieh, on the north of Ludd. The tradition which connects Joseph with

[1] Psa. lxxii. 3, 7.

this place, however, is quite ancient, confused and doubtful though it may be. Dr. Robinson discusses the question with his usual learning; and, with his usual distrust of tradition, settles it against Ramleh. There is too little resemblance between the names of Ramleh—sand—and Arimathea, derived from a root which means high, and is applied to towns on elevated sites, to build anything upon the mere name; but those who have faith in ecclesiastical tradition will scarcely give up Ramleh on this account. According to Arab historians, Ramleh is not an ancient town. Abulfeda says it was built by Suleiman, son of the Khalif Abd el Melek, who lived and reigned early in the eighth century. But this scarcely touches the question about Arimathea, for the Muhammedans rarely built entirely de novo, and there may have been a town here from ancient times called Ramathaim; but the form of the word not being according to Arab taste and idiom, it was changed to Ramleh for the new town.

Ramleh is a larger town than Ludd, and has now about three thousand inhabitants, a greater proportion of whom are Christians than in any other place on the plain. There are many good houses, several churches and convents for pilgrims, and some large, well-built soap factories. A large ancient church, once dedicated to St. John, is now the chief mosk of the place. Lieutenant Conder gives the following measurements of this edifice: "In length it is one hundred and fifty feet, in breadth seventy-five feet. The interior consists of a nave and two aisles, with the principal and side apses, and with seven bays of clustered columns;" and he adds, "it is the finest and best preserved church I have seen in Palestine." It always fills me with indignation to see these ancient edifices thus perverted; and it would be an act of real justice should the Christian nations compel the restitution of this church, and all others like it, to the native Christians. Most of the European governments have consular agents here, and there is more wealth and a greater approximation to the style and manners of a city than in other towns of the same size in Palestine. This is doubtless owing to constant intercourse with pilgrims and European travellers.

My main purpose in climbing to this lofty lookout a second



RAMLEH.

time is to obtain from you such an explanation of the surrounding country as will enable me to connect the various sites and scenes which the eye rests upon with their Biblical histories.

Scarcely could one find in all Palestine such another stand-point, from whence the view is so extensive or more suggestive.

Yon village, two hours east of us, on the regular road to Jerusalem, is Kubâb, and that low and broad tell south of it is called Tell Jezer. The tomb of Sheikh Muhammed el Jezair, or Abu Shûsheh, is just visible over the swell in the plain, and also the dwelling-house recently built by Mr. Bergheim of Jerusalem, who has purchased the tell and its surrounding fields, some five thousand acres, and is rapidly transforming it into a fine farm. If it proves a permanent pecuniary success, it will be the only speculation of the kind that I have known in this country, during a residence of over forty years, that has thus rewarded its possessor. But, apart from my personal interest in its energetic owner, Tell Jezer has recently attracted extraordinary attention as the site of the long-lost Gezer. Dr. Sandreczki, Dr. Chaplin, M. Ganneau, and Lieutenant Conder have thoroughly examined and ventilated its claims, and they appear to entertain no doubt about the identification. The position corresponds quite well with some of the Biblical indications, as in Joshua xvi. 3, and 1 Kings ix. 16, 17; and more especially with the numerous places where it is mentioned in 1 Maccabees, which imply that it was south of Emmaus towards Azotus.[1] But if it formed a point in the border of Ephraim, as stated in Joshua xvi. 3, the territory of that tribe extended much farther south than has been generally supposed. In Maccabees the name is always spelled Gazera, at least in English, and I have never been able to examine the original. Again, I have always imagined that the Gezer whose king came to assist Lachish against Joshua was many miles farther south.[2] So, also, it seems strange to find a Canaanitish city up here in the very heart of the country so late as the reign of Solomon; and yet such must have been the case, if this is the Gezer that Pharaoh captured and presented to his daughter, the wife of Solomon.[3] Neither would one naturally

[1] 1 Macc. iv. 15; vii. 45; ix. 52; xiv. 34; xv. 28, 35; xvi. 1, 19, 21.
[2] Josh. x. 33. [3] 1 Kings ix. 16.

look in this direction for that Gezer to which David pursued the routed Philistines after the battle of the mulberry-trees, somewhere south of Jerusalem.[1] It is curious, too, that in the Onomasticon Gezer is said to be four miles north of Emmaus, Nicopolis, whereas, if this Tell Jezer be the place intended, it is full that distance west of it.

The identification of this site by M. Ganneau excited peculiar interest at the time, and he thus writes about the discovery:

"This, as I may almost call it, accidental discovery, which I announced at the time to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres, and which was received with some incredulity, met with a most unexpected confirmation four years afterwards, in 1874, when, on visiting the spot in the service of the Palestine Exploration Fund, I discovered at Abu Shûsheh, in the exact locality I had fixed upon as the site of Gezer, bilingual inscriptions in Greek and Hebrew deeply carved upon the rock, with the Biblical name of Gezer written in full, and repeated twice; and marking, without doubt, the priestly limit or sabbatical zone which surrounded the place." M. Ganneau may well be pardoned the high satisfaction which he expresses in this fortunate discovery. So far as I know, this is the only bilingual inscription ever found in Palestine. On the whole, I think the officers of the Palestine Exploration Fund have satisfactorily proved that this tell marks the site of Gezer, which was allotted to the Levites of the Kohathite family, as mentioned in Joshua xxi. 21. And herein consists the chief interest in the identification. The careful and learned discussions by which this resuit is reached can be found in the publications of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Lieutenant Conder, while examining the site, found no less than twenty-three wine-presses, some of them very perfect. He also discovered many other indications of a large ancient city, including rock-cut tombs—a fact not altogether in accord with the sanctity of a Levitical city.

Where is Modin, so celebrated in the Maccabees and in Josephus?

During my rambles over this region in former years I made many and fruitless inquiries about the seven pyramids which Simon

[1] 2 Sam. v. 25.

erected over the sepulchres of his parents and his brethren at Modin. The author of the Maccabees tells us that Simon "set great pillars about the monument, and upon the pillars he made all their armor for a perpetual memory, and by the armor ships carved, that they might be seen of all that sail on the sea. This is the sepulchre which he made at Modin, and it standeth yet unto this day."[1] Josephus, who wrote some two hundred years later, testifies that the monument still stood in his day. But pyramids and pillars, and all the "cunning devices" about and upon them, have long since disappeared. I had been led, by the topographical indications in the different narratives, to look for Modin and its monuments at or near Lâtrôn, but Dr. Sandreczki and the officers of the Palestine Exploration Fund believe they have discovered the long-lost site at a village called el Medyeh, on the hill-side eastwards of Ludd. Lieutenant Conder has given a minute description of the site and the existing remains. But if his conclusions as to dimensions, and especially as to the height of the pyramids—nine or ten feet—be correct, one of two results seems inevitable: either this is not the true site, or the descriptions both in Maccabees and in Josephus are extravagant exaggerations.

Lieutenant Conder states that indications of the seven sepulchres exist. The group bears the local name of Kubûr el Yehûd—graves of the Jews. The pyramid over the sepulchres he supposes to have stood upon an elevated platform eighty feet square, enclosed by a very strong outer wall, and that platform and pyramid together had an elevation of only sixteen cubits; still, "from the position, it could not fail to be conspicuous from the whole extent of the sea-shore, visible from about the latitude of Mukhâlid far down towards Gaza."

From this plain of Sharon there are two main roads over the mountains to Jerusalem, one from Ludd and the other from Ramleh by Wady 'Aly. As we do not take either of them, this is the spot from which to point out the places of special interest along and about them. From Ludd the shortest and most unfrequented path leads down into a wady, which it partly follows for three miles to a place called Jimzu, no doubt the Gimzo reconquered by the

[1] 1 Macc. xiii. 27–30.

Philistines in the days of Ahab.[1] On the north of Jimzu is a large tell covered with rubbish, and now named Duhiêry. The road keeps up the valley to the eastwards called Wady Zakarîya, Zechariah, and in it are some caverns and old foundations, marking an ancient site, which also bears the name of that prophet. Berfilya is in Wady Suleimân, south-east of Jimzu, and a road passes up this valley to el Jîb. About an hour and a half above Jimzu is Beit 'Ûr et Tahta, Lower Beth-horon; and it is just another hour to Beit 'Ûr el Fôka, Upper Beth-horon; steep climbing over an extremely rough road. On one occasion I went to Jerusalem from Ludd, and, being alone, I wandered out of the way above Upper Beth-horon; and, after a rough scramble through a wild region, I came to a partially ruined village called Kefîr. This is probably the Chephira of the Gibeonites. A company of woodcutters gave me the name, and their occupation reminded me of the curse laid upon the four cities that "did work wilily" to beguile Joshua into "a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them."[2] If the place be Chephira, then the sites of all those four cities are known: Gibeon is el Jîb, Beeroth is el Bîreh, south of Bethel, and Kirjath-jearim is Kuryet el 'Enab. The confederate host that attacked Gibeon, and was defeated by Joshua, fled down the valley past Beth-horon, thence across Merj Ibn 'Omier, probably the valley of Ajalon, where that leader of Israel, looking back towards Gibeon and down upon the noble valley before him, uttered the celebrated command: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon."[3] His victorious army "chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah."[4] These places are all still found, and in exact agreement with the account of the great victory, as given in the tenth chapter of Joshua.

What a cluster of Biblical sites this tower of Ramleh gathers about it! No one can hear the names of the places, and contemplate the scenes there enacted, without feeling assured that he is indeed in the Land of the Bible.

A very just remark; but we must suspend our survey, and de-

[1] 2 Chron. xxviii. 18. [2] Josh. ix. 4, 15. [3] Josh. x. 12. [4] Josh. x. 10.

scend from this rather breezy lookout to our tent. In the evening we may resume the subject, for there are some places of great interest not yet described.

April 12th. Evening.

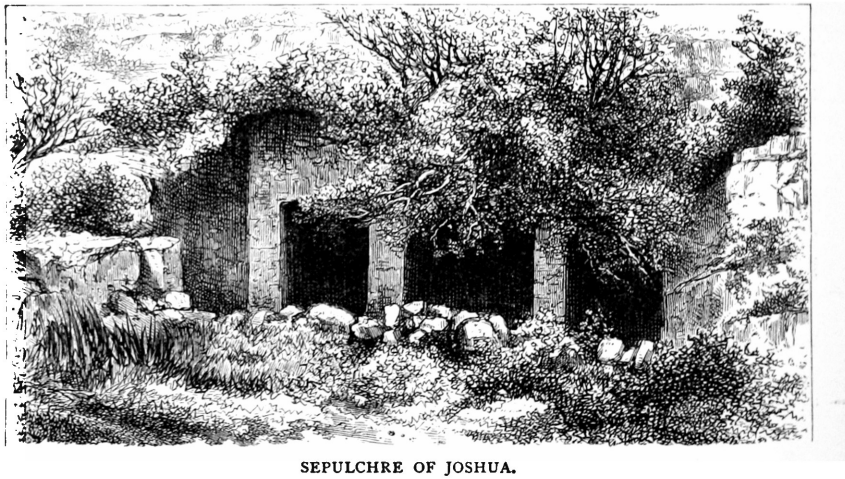
This morning you indicated, from the top of the tower, the position of a village called Tibneh, on the mountain a few miles north-east of el Medyeh. Was it distinguished in Bible times?

It marks the site of Timnath-serah, where Joshua closed his long and glorious career. In the nineteenth chapter of Joshua we read, at the forty-ninth and fiftieth verses, "When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them: according to the word of the Lord they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim: and he built the city, and dwelt therein;" and in the twenty-ninth and thirtieth verses of the twenty-fourth chapter it is recorded that he died there, "being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash." Much surprise was expressed in Jerome's time that he who gave the whole nation their inheritance should have selected this place for his own lot. The surroundings are singularly wild, rocky, and barren, but his choice may have been influenced by these very characteristics as promising a secluded and peaceful retreat for the evening of his eventful life. It also occupied a central position in the territory of his own tribe.

The Roman road from Jerusalem to Cæsarea by Antipatris passed through the village, and it is probable that the Apostle Paul was conducted along it by the Roman soldiers. The chief interest in Tibneh is derived from the numerous rock-cut tombs, many of which are doubtless "on the north side of the hill of Gaash," and one of them is believed to be the sepulchre of Israel's great captain. It is thus described by Lieutenant Conder: "This is certainly the most striking monument in the country, and strongly recommends itself to the mind as an authentic site. That it is the sepulchre of a man of distinction is manifest from the great number of lamp niches which cover the walls of the porch; there are over two hun-

dred arranged in vertical rows, giving the appearance of an ornamental pattern, and all smoke-blacked. Entering the low door, we find the interior chamber to be a square with five loculi, not very perfectly cut on three sides. The whole is quite unornamented, except by four very rough brackets supporting the flat roof. On becoming accustomed to the darkness, one perceives that the central loculus at the back forms a little passage about 7 feet long, 2 feet 6 inches high, and 3 feet 4 inches broad, through which one creeps into a second but smaller chamber, 9 feet 3 inches by 8 feet 1 inch, and 5 feet 5 inches high. In this, opposite the entrance, a single loculus runs at right angles to the wall, and a single niche is cut on the left for a lamp. Here, then, if we accept the site, is the resting-place of the great leader, the stout soldier, the fierce invader, who first brought Israel into the Promised Land."

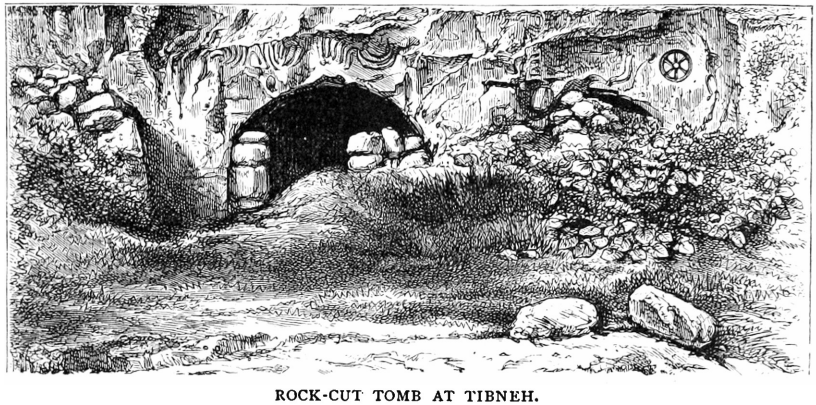
If this be so, then, with the exception of Machpelah, there is not a more interesting sepulchre in Palestine.



SEPULCHRE OF JOSHUA.

Of Moses, Joshua's great master, it is truly said, "No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day;" and the exact site of the new tomb from whence the Lord of Life arose and burst the bands of death has been divinely concealed; but the grave of him who typified the Captain of our Salvation and bare his name may be re-

vealed to us in the rock-cut chamber at Timnath-serah. The site was first identified as the home and burial-place of the great leader of Israel by Dr. Eli Smith, the travelling companion of Dr. Edward Robinson. The village was once a place of considerable importance, and gave its name to a district, or toparchy, called Thamna, that included much of the country between it and Ludd.



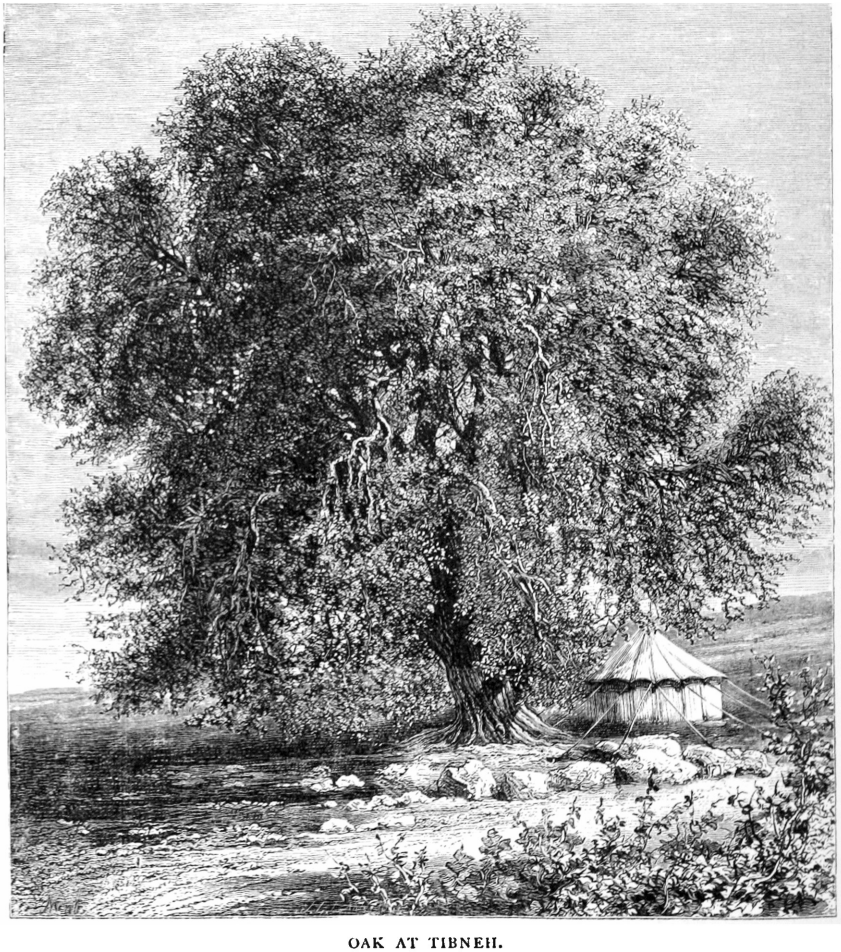
ROCK-CUT TOMB AT TIBNEH.

Besides the sepulchre of Joshua, there are other rock-hewn tombs at Tibneh well worth the attention of the visitor, though, as Lieutenant Conder says, "almost every tomb has its porch so filled with rubbish that only the top of the little door into the tomb is visible."

Tibneh appears to have been a favorite burial-place in ancient times.

This was quite natural. Orientals of all sects have ever manifested a strong and even superstitious desire to be buried near the tombs of saints and celebrated heroes; and if the tomb of Joshua here at Tibneh were not thus associated with other sepulchres, this fact would of itself cast a doubt upon the truth of the identification. There is at Tibneh a venerable and remarkable oak-tree, and this, also, is common at such sacred localities. Lieutenant Conder thus describes it: "The Roman road passes between the plateau and the tell, and not far south of it stands perhaps the oldest and finest tree in Palestine. This noble oak, which must be upwards of thirty feet in height, and beautifully symmetrical, is all the more

striking to the sight after a residence in a country but sparsely scattered with olives and ballût of no great size. It is covered with foliage, the leaves being very small, and has received the name of Sheikh Taim from the natives."



OAK AT TIBNEH.

We shall have occasion hereafter to notice that there are many incidental references in the Bible to remarkable trees, and it is fair to infer that this country was generally as destitute of great trees in early times as it is now.

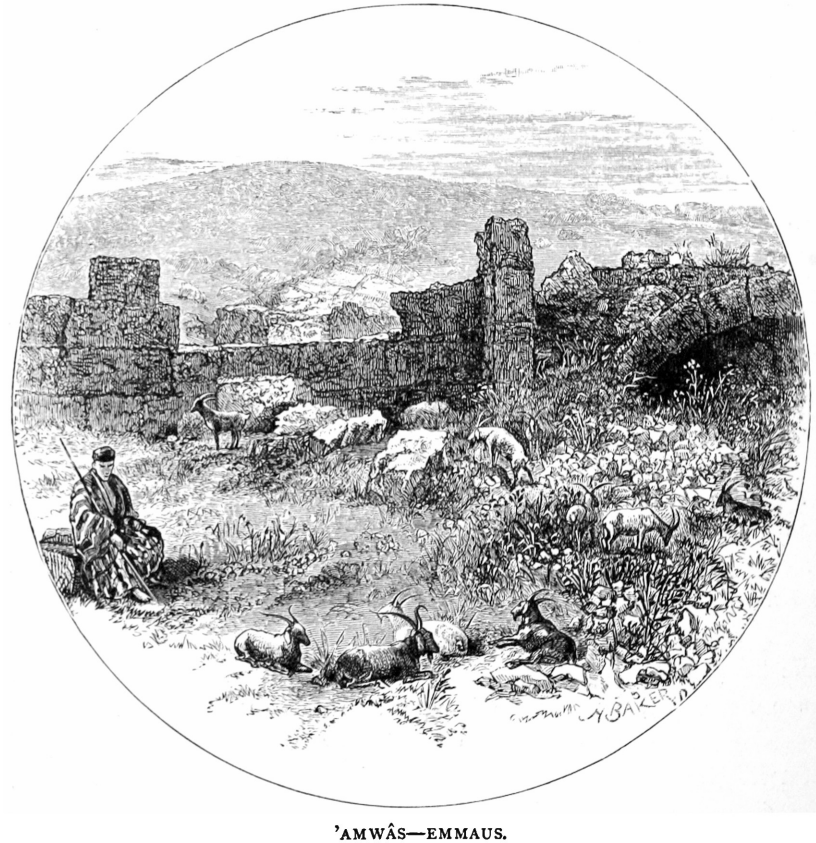
Sunday, April 13th.

That which interested me most yesterday was 'Amwâs. Do you suppose it is the site of the Emmaus towards which the two disciples were pursuing their sad walk when the risen Saviour joined them, and where he was revealed to them in the breaking of bread?

So thought Eusebius and Jerome, but there are grave objections against it. Luke says it was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem, and this site is more than that distance as the crow flies.[1] If we were at liberty to correct the text, as has been suggested, and make it read one hundred and sixty furlongs instead of sixty, that would bring you to 'Amwâs; but could the disciples get back to Jerusalem that same night, before the apostles had retired to sleep, as we are expressly told that they did?[2] It was certainly evening when they sat down to meat. They could not, therefore, have started back before dark; still I think they could have accomplished the journey from 'Amwâs. It is not more than sixteen miles distant from Jerusalem, and it is quite probable that there was a footpath over the mountains direct to the city. With such news as the two disciples were bearing to their disconsolate brethren, they would take the very shortest road, and make all possible haste. The walk would not require more than five hours, and if they left 'Amwâs at seven o'clock, they would be in the Holy City by midnight. Nor need it occasion any surprise that the apostles were together at that late hour. The entire company of believers must have been in a state of great excitement, wonder, and expectancy. Since, therefore, there is no insuperable difficulty in the return to Jerusalem from 'Amwâs, and a possibility that the true reading of the text gives one hundred and sixty furlongs instead of sixty, and, also, since the most careful research has failed to discover any other Emmaus in that region, it will scarcely be safe to reject absolutely the testimony of Eusebius and Jerome, and the belief of the entire ancient Church. I should like to believe that we have in 'Amwâs the scene of that most interesting conversation and miracle recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke. If it be not there, the true site is yet to be found. Josephus states that Cæsar, after the destruction of Jerusalem, gave Emmaus, a village sixty fur-

[1] Luke xxiv. 13. [2] Luke xxiv. 33.

longs from the city, to eight hundred of his soldiers, whom he had dismissed from his army.[1] This may be identical with the Emmaus of Luke. Dr. Robinson identifies Kuryet el 'Enab, Kirjath-jearim, with Emmaus. It is the right distance from Jerusalem, and it would be a very appropriate situation to plant a colony of dis-



'AMWÂS—EMMAUS.

banded troops, for they would command the road from the seaboard to Jerusalem. The two things do not clash, for Kuryet el 'Enab may be both Kirjath-jearim and Emmaus; and it renders this site more interesting to find it not only the resting-place of the ark, but, long after, the place where He who was infinitely greater than the ark revealed himself in the breaking of bread to those wonder-

[1] Wars, vii. vi. 6.

ing disciples. Some modern writers locate Emmaus at Kubeibeh, and others at Kŭlônieh, but for this there is no historic authority, and Kŭlônieh is much too near Jerusalem.

But even though 'Amwâs may not be the Emmaus of Luke, it early became celebrated; and there are still the remains of a church there, and other indications of antiquity. It was called Nicopolis by Julius Africanus, who caused it to be rebuilt early in the third century; and under this name it is often mentioned by Eusebius, Jerome, and other early writers. It also figures largely in the Crusades, as does Beit Nŭba, a village north-east of it, which marks the limit of Richard the Lion-hearted's career in this country. He loitered several weeks there in fruitless negotiations with Saladin, and then returned disappointed to Ramleh.

There are fine fountains below 'Amwâs, which Pliny mentions;[1] and good water in this neighborhood is most acceptable, even in spring, as the pilgrims have abundant reason to remember; for the road is lined with boys and girls with jars of it for sale.

For sites like this of 'Amwâs, that recall incidents of special moment, I am conscious of an ever-growing reverence. They seem providentially perpetuated from the distant ages to bear witness to the reality of those things with which they are intimately associated. Familiarity is said to breed contempt, but in this case I have no fear of such a sinister result.

Not contempt, certainly, but there is more than a possibility that thoughtless and intimate association may induce indifference. These peasants of Sharon look upon the sites and scenes, which so deeply affect you, with utter insensibility, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem go in and out of the gates of Zion without bestowing a thought upon the significance with which religion has clothed everything in and about the Holy City.

The time may come when I shall need to be on my guard in this respect, but thus far the effect produced by closer acquaintance has been quite the reverse. Things innumerable constantly remind me that I have found the true home of the Bible, where the prophets and apostles wrote their inspired revelations, and willing witnesses, on every side, testify to this great fact.

[1] Book vi. 14.

You do not overstate the case, nor place too high a value upon such testimony, for, rightly heard and truly interpreted, it adds many a link to the golden chain of evidence that holds our faith fast anchored to the Word of God. Remembering where we now are, and with what scenes and scenery surrounded, our thoughts are directed most naturally to this particular phase of the general subject, and, for illustration, we may resort, for a moment, to an imaginary incident: A learned Pundit in the East had a Bible presented to him, and, after carefully reading it, he resolved to institute a thorough investigation into the reality of its claims to acceptance. He rightly saw that the entire book is inextricably interwoven with human history and numberless incidents in ordinary human life. Countless names of places, persons, and things are mentioned in connection with a small and well-defined land, and of a peculiar character. "These things I can examine," says he, "and if they accord with the statements in the book, I shall prosecute the further study of it with greater respect and confidence. But if there is no such land, no such places or things, and no evidence that such persons ever lived there and performed the acts ascribed to them, then I shall know that the book is a forgery. I will go thither, and see for myself."

Arrived on this coast, our Pundit inquires for Joppa, but can hear of no such city. He lands, and is told that no city of that or any other name similar to it ever existed in that region. "What!" says the bewildered Pundit, "no Joppa in this country, no Cæsarea, no Jerusalem, no Bethlehem, no Hebron?" To these, and all such questions, the reply is always the same: "We know nothing about these places, nor has any tradition regarding them come down to us from our forefathers. Strangers like you from a distance visit us, and make inquiry about them, and many other wonderful things of which we of the country have never heard." If, on further investigation, the physical features of the country, its climate, and its animal and vegetable productions, are found to be totally diverse from those mentioned in the book, what other conclusion could the visitor adopt but that the book was an impudent forgery?

That no such result could be reached by any investigation of

this country is now well known to all the world. The places and the things inquired for are all here, in their right positions, and ever ready to bear testimony to the truthfulness of the sacred writers. We may, therefore, dismiss our imaginary Pundit and all his sceptical perplexities. It will be well, however, to continue the inquiry for ourselves on a more comprehensive basis, and we may be quite sure that the Bible will come triumphantly through the most searching examination carried out into minutest details. So far from proving it to be a fable or a forgery, such an investigation would powerfully corroborate its claims to be a divine revelation, written by holy men inspired by the Spirit of God.

The names of persons, places, things, and incidents around and about us both illustrate and confirm the Bible, and it is this fact alone that gives them special significance and real importance to me.

The range of topics, historic, moral, social, and religious, is very wide and surprisingly diversified. Think, if you can, of a Bible with all these left out, or others essentially different substituted in their place—a Bible without patriarch or pilgrimage; with no bondage in Egypt or deliverance therefrom, no Red Sea, no Sinai with its miracles, no Wilderness of Wandering with all the included scenes and associated incidents; without a Jordan with Canaan over against it, or a Dead Sea with Sodom beneath it; no Moriah with its temple, no Zion with palaces upon it. Whence could have come our divine songs and psalms, if the sacred poets had lived in a land without mountain or valley, where were no plains covered over with corn, no hills planted with the olive, the fig, and the vine? All are needed, and all do good service, from the oaks of Bashan and the cedars of Lebanon "even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." We can dispense with none of them. The tiny mustard-seed has its moral, and the lilies of the field their lessons. Thorns and thistles utter admonitions, and revive sad memories. The shepherd and his flock, the sheep and the fold, the ox and his yoke, the camel and his burden, the ass and his owner, the horse with neck clothed with thunder; lions that roar, wolves that raven, foxes that spoil, harts panting for water-brooks, and roes feeding amongst lilies; doves in their windows, sparrows on the

house-top, storks in the heavens, eagles hasting to the prey; things great and small; the busy bee, and the careful ant laying up store in harvest—these are merely random specimens out of a world of rich materials all congregated in this land, where their presence was needed to enrich and adorn the revelation of God to man.

This seems to be quite evident; and I can also see that if the condition of the people associated with these external phenomena had been essentially different from that of the Hebrews and their neighbors, the result could not have been achieved, at least not in the form in which we now have it.

Again, suppose there had been no heathen in their borders with idols to corrupt, no enemies to fear and resist, like the Philistines, the Midianites, or the Canaanites; or if the customs and occupations of the people had been other than they were, and there had been no ploughing and sowing; neither seed-time, nor harvest, nor summer threshing-floor with useless chaff; no vineyard, or vine-dresser with pruning-hook; no vintage or wine-press; if there had sailed over Galilee no boat, and no fisherman had cast a net into that lovely sea; if there had been no weaver with his shuttle and loom, no refiner with his furnace, no smith with his forge, no potter with his wheel; or no warrior with bow and battle-axe, sword and shield, no bloody battles, no slaughtered victims, no prisons, chains, or captive slaves; no floods to drown, no famine to consume, no earthquake to terrify and overwhelm, no pestilence to desolate, no rust to corrupt, moth to eat, locusts to lay waste, scorpion to sting, serpent to bite—then would it have been utterly impossible for the sacred writers to have given us such a book as we now possess.

In a word, therefore, if we should erase from our Bibles all that has a manifest connection with or necessary basis in this land, there would be very little left; and any attempt to fill up these erasures with other names, narratives, and incidents would be simply preposterous.

V.

RAMLEH TO ASHDOD.

Soap Factories at Ramleh.—Alkali.—Cactus.—Open Cistern.—Wady 'Aly.—Lâtrôn.—'Akir, Ekron.—Return of the Ark.—'Ain esh Shems, Beth-shemesh.—Slaughter of the Beth-shemites.—Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron.—Ekron and her Towns.—Floral Beauty of the Plain of Philistia.—Eastern Border of Philistia.—Samson at Timnath.—Biblical Sites.—Social Relations between the Hebrews and the Canaanites.—Intermarriages.—Ancient Inhabitants not Exterminated.—Beasts of the Field.—Philip and the Eunuch.—Sirocco Winds, Two Kinds.—Wady Sŭrâr, Valley of Sorek.—El Mughâr, Makkedah.—Azekah.—Libnah.—Yebna, Jamnia.—Mosk at Jamnia.—Fortifications at the Harbor of Jamnia.—Jaffa to Yebna.—Summer Threshing-floors.—Threshing Instruments.—Winnowing-fan and Fork.—Whirlwinds.—Yebna Centre of Hebrew Learning.—Sanhedrim.—Plain of Philistia occupied by the Jews.—Gamaliel.—Simeon.—Yebna to Ashdod.—Wady es Sŭnt.—Esdûd, Ashdod.—Extermination of the Philistines.—Siege of Ashdod by Psammetichus.—Biblical and Historical Notices of Ashdod.—Statements of Herodotus.—Route from Lâtrôn to Esdûd.—Harvest Scenes in Philistia.—Dense Fog.—Cloud of Dew in the Heat of Harvest.—Length of Harvest.—Gleaning.—Manufacture of Unburnt Brick in Palestine and Egypt.—Hebrew Bondage in Egypt.—Kŭsh, Stubble.—Burnt Brick and Brickkilns.—Manufacturing Establishments of the Khedive.—Ashes of the Furnace breaking into Boils and Blains.—Making Brick on the Nile.—Ancient Bricks.—Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians.—Tower of Babel.—Houses in Native Villages.—The Sâkieh.

April 14th.

A WALK through the streets this morning has not increased my respect for Ramleh. I got bewildered amongst narrow, crooked lanes which led nowhere in particular, and had a regular battle with dogs, hairless and mangy, until a one-eyed man drove them away, and guided me out of the perplexing labyrinth. Are the large mounds of gray rubbish that encumber some of the streets the ashes of soap factories?

They are, and they speak of an extensive business continued through many centuries. Similar heaps are found at Gaza, Jerusalem, and many other places; but by far the largest I have seen are at Edlib, south-west of Aleppo; and there, too, are the most

extensive olive-orchards in the country. I cannot account for these hills of ashes, except on the supposition that the kŭly, alkali, used in the manufacture of soap has been very impure, leaving a large residuum to be cast out upon these heaps.

From whence is this kŭly, and by what process is it manufactured?

In Syria it is obtained mostly from the Arabs of the frontier deserts, where it is made by burning the glasswort and other saliferous plants that grow on those arid plains. The kŭly resembles in appearance cakes of coarse salt, and it is generally adulterated with sand, earth, ashes, and other extraneous materials; and from them these tells of rubbish gradually accumulate around the places where soap is manufactured. The growth of these mounds, however, is so slow that it must have taken centuries for those at Edlib to reach their present size. The mineral alkali, called natron, found in Egypt, and employed from remotest antiquity for various purposes besides making soap, as we learn from Herodotus and other old authors, is not used in this country.

Both kinds of alkali are mentioned, I suppose, in the Bible. Jeremiah says of the degenerate Jews of his day, "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God."[1] This borith, here translated soap, was, doubtless, some cleansing preparation of vegetable alkali, and the nitre was the mineral natron of Egypt. Malachi also speaks of "fullers' soap," where the same word borith is used.[2] Solomon was acquainted with the natron of Egypt, and also with the fact that it effervesced violently when brought into contact with vinegar; and he says that this is like singing songs to a heavy heart.[3] The wise king's own heart seems to have been in an effervescing state when he indited his Ecclesiastical complaints and confessions.

These ash-heaps are extremely mischievous, for they not only add to the heat which renders Ramleh almost uninhabitable in summer, but, on the occurrence of the slightest wind, the air is filled with a fine, pungent dust, which is very injurious to the eyes. I once walked the streets counting all that were either blind or had

[1] Jer. ii. 22. [2] Mal. iii. 2. [3] Prov. xxv. 20.

defective eyes, and it amounted to about one-half of the male population. The women I could not count, for they are more rigidly veiled in Ramleh than in any other town in this region. I never saw the faces of those in whose house I resided for a month. Whenever I had occasion to go out or come in, a servant or one of the sons always preceded me, calling out, "Et tarîûk! et tarîûk!" —the way! the way!—when the women fled and concealed themselves in their own apartments. But we must leave Ramleh; and I fear we shall encounter a sirocco to-day, for there are premonitory puffs of hot air which rarely deceive.

Our camp for the coming night is to be at Ashdod, and the muleteers will go directly there; but we will follow for some distance east of Ramleh the carriage-road that leads up Wady 'Aly to Jerusalem, and then visit Ekron and other places in the intervening country.

I became entangled this morning in a net-work of these prickly-pear hedges, and found some difficulty in escaping from it.

The cactus here grows to an extraordinary size, and forms a barrier around orchards and vegetable-gardens quite impenetrable not only to animals but even to robbers. Turn a little to the right, and you will see one of Ramleh's specialties.

Why, here is an immense open cistern, with a score of lads swimming in it, while the water-carriers are filling their jars in the midst of the rollicking bathers! I hope the inhabitants are not compelled to use this loathsome water.

There are no fountains in Ramleh; but some of the inhabitants have cisterns of their own, which are kept clean, and filled with rain-water from the roofs of their houses. Many, however, depend altogether upon this filthy cistern. I have pitched my tent on this grassy plateau east of the pool, and could then get no other water; and before we complete our travels we may find ourselves in places where even such a beverage as this will be our only resource. Let us now ride up through this grand old olive-grove to an elevated spot some distance to the south-east which commands an extensive view over the country.

This is truly a prospect of great rural beauty, and the site makes one long to traverse the plain in all directions.

Many similar scenes are in reserve for us, as we are about to enter a region crowded with Biblical and historic sites.

On the tower of Ramleh you described the road from Ludd to Jerusalem, but said nothing about this carriage-road by Wady 'Aly.

Because there is very little to say. It does not pass through a single Biblical site on this western side of the mountains. Gezer is a considerable distance south of it, and 'Amwâs to the north-east. Just at the entrance into Wady 'Aly is Lâtrôn, a wretched hamlet, the home, according to ecclesiastical tradition, of Disma, the penitent thief, who was crucified for robbing pilgrims and travellers in the wady, and hence the name Lâtrôn, or Ladrone, robber. During the Crusades it was an important military station, and its castle commanded the entrance into the wady. Since the completion of the carriage-road, a respectable station has been erected some distance above Lâtrôn; but from there to Kuryet el 'Enab — three weary hours—there is neither water nor any object of antiquity to attract attention, except the tomb of Imâm 'Aly, below Sârîs, from whom the valley takes its name. Kuryet el 'Enab for the last half century has had a bad notoriety as the residence of the mountain-robber, Abu Ghaush. We will visit it and other places in that neighborhood from the Holy City.

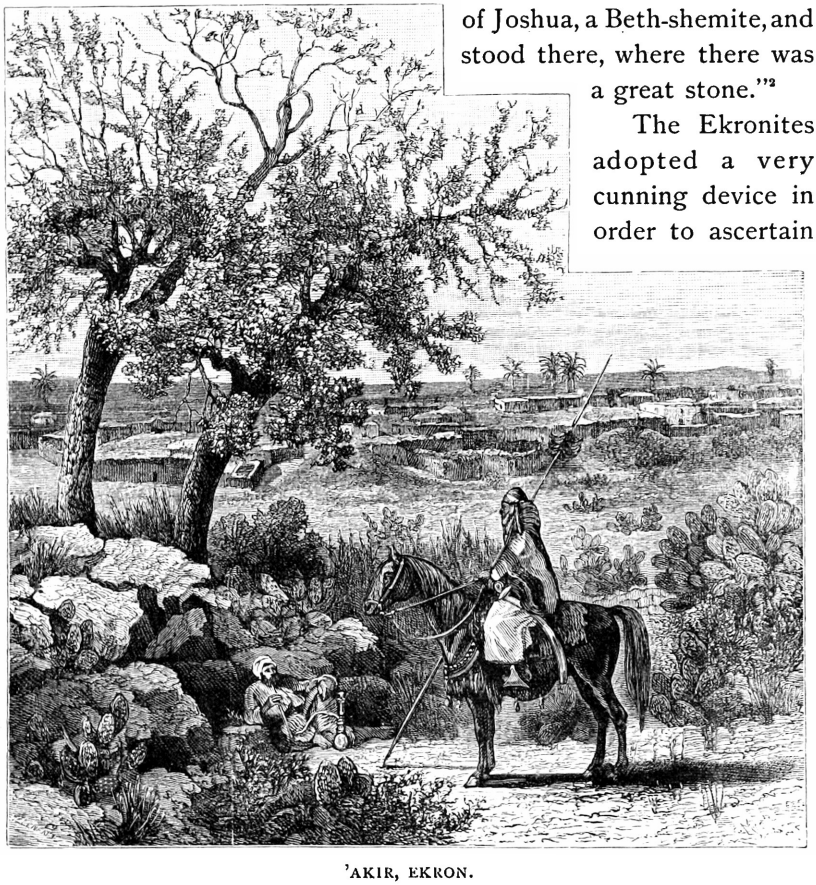
We are passing into a region quite different from that about Ramleh; the soil is sandy and barren, and the pathway descends quite rapidly towards the south. What is the name of that village immediately before us?

It is called 'Akir, and, no doubt, is the modern representative of Ekron.

Is it possible that the royal city of the Philistines has shrunk to this forlorn cluster of low earth-roofed hovels?

Such is the fact; but though the village itself is squalid and the people rude, the wide valley below it is extremely fertile. I have ridden from Yebna to 'Akir in an hour and a half, through continuous fields of luxuriant wheat. It was in harvest-time, and the whole country was alive with merry reapers, and many Ekronites were threshing in the floors on the hill-side, north-west of the village. The scene reminded me of that extraordinary incident recorded in the sixth chapter of 1 Samuel. It must have been at

the same season of the year when the ark set out from that place on its divinely guided return to the people of God; for "they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it."[1] "The cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone."[2]

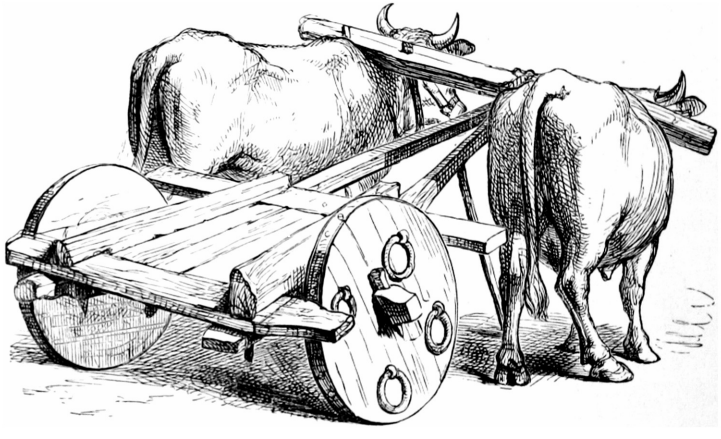


'AKIR, EKRON.

The Ekronites adopted a very cunning device in order to ascertain whether or not the pestilence that desolated their city was from the God of the Hebrews. "If it [the ark] goeth up by the way of his own coast to Beth-shemesh," they said, "then he has done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us."[3]

[1] 1 Sam. vi. 13. [2] 1 Sam. vi. 14. [3] 1 Sam. vi. 9.

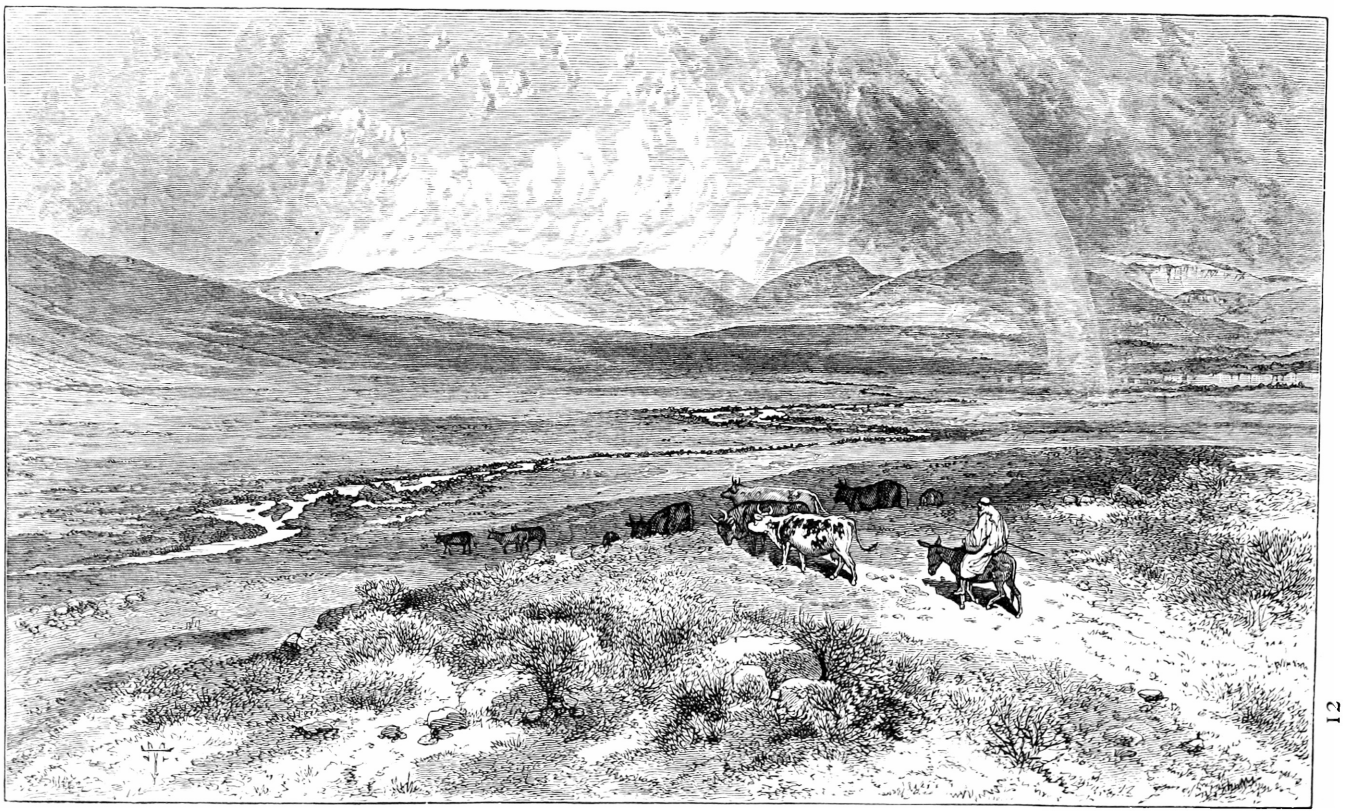
There was nothing remarkable in the fact that cows were selected for the experiment, for in this country they are employed just like other oxen; but these were to be "milch kine on which there hath come no yoke," and their calves were to be brought home from them. The test was successful: "The kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the high-



ORIENTAL OX-CART.

way, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left." With what strange emotions the lords of the Philistines must have followed that cart "unto the border of Beth-shemesh."

We have before us, stretching far to the south-east, the very plain across which the unbroken and unguided kine pursued their steady course; but we search in vain for the highway which then existed. Nor is this strange. No wheeled vehicles have been used in these parts for many generations, and all roads for them have long since disappeared. Beth-shemesh was near the débouchure upon the plain of Wady Sŭrâr; and there is an 'Ain esh Shems there at the present day; and somewhere near it, no doubt, was the ancient city. When I passed through that region, the entire population — men, women, and children — were abroad harvesting, and a ruder and more irreverent set one could rarely meet with anywhere. It would have required a judgment somewhat similar to that in-



WADY SŬRÂR—SCENE OF THE RETURN OF THE ARK.

flicted upon the Beth-shemites to have deterred them from looking into the ark, had it thus been brought amongst them.

It is generally admitted, I believe, that, at a very early period, an error occurred in transcription with regard to the numbers who perished on that occasion.

That is the most natural way to account for the difficulty. Beth-shemesh was an inconsiderable village, every trace of which has long since disappeared; and its population, all told, could not have amounted to one-tenth of fifty thousand. Josephus mentions only seventy as the number of those smitten, and in the original it was probably written seventy. The destruction of threescore and ten would be a warning sufficiently emphatic and solemn to reinvest the returned ark with the needed sanctity and reverence.

Josephus says Ekron's god was a fly; and this appears to be the meaning of the name "Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron," of whom Ahaziah, the king of Samaria, sent to inquire whether or not he should recover from his fall "through a lattice in his upper chamber," as we read in the first chapter of 2 Kings. In the New Testament, the same name is given by the Jews to the prince of the devils.

The word, in Greek, is Beel-zebul, and should be so expressed in English, I suppose, wherever it occurs in the New Testament.[1] To this name several significations have been given by learned critics: Lord of Flies, Lord of Filth, Lord of Habitations, etc. In Arabic, zebul means dung, and baal, lord, and Baal-zebul would naturally be translated Lord of Dung; and this agrees with the Hebrew radical zebul, which, however, in many places in the Old Testament, signifies house or habitation;[2] and hence critics have argued that Beel-zebul, undoubtedly the correct reading, means the god of habitations, which is certainly more respectable than that of a dunghill. In 2 Kings, however, the name is Baal-zebub, the fly-god, as Josephus also has it, worshipped, perhaps, as the destroyer of those troublesome insects, much as St. Patrick is reverenced for his expulsion of serpents from Ireland. There would be some excuse for these modern Ekronites if they could secure

[1] Matt. x. 25; xii. 24; Mark iii. 22; Luke xi. 15, 18, 19.

[2] 1 Kings viii. 13; 2 Chron. vi. 2; Psa. xlix. 15; Isa. lxiii. 15; Hab. iii. 11.

deliverance from the pest of flies by propitiating the power of even Baal-zebub. We were so persecuted by them on a previous visit, that it was difficult to secure a photograph of this featureless representative of the god's dwelling-place. If there ever was a temple dedicated to him in Ekron, all trace of it has disappeared, or the ruins may be buried up deep beneath the dunghills, which here, as in many other villages of Philistia, have accumulated around the native habitations. The cock disputes at present with mangy dogs the honor of being lord over these hills.

It is amongst the strangest anomalies in the genesis of human language that this insignificant village should have given rise to the name so abhorred by civilized nations.

The name, however spelled, was used by the Jews in the time of our Saviour as a term of the utmost contempt; and this evil signification has been perpetuated in all lands and languages of Christendom to our own time. Poor Ekron! thy god was Baal-zebub, and nothing can ever redeem thee from this bad eminence.

"Ekron, with her towns and her villages," was assigned to Judah.[1] Though it has never ceased to exist, it has scarcely any history, Biblical, classic, or Arabic. It appears to have been fortified with walls and gates in the time of David; for, after the fall of Goliath, "the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron."[2] Not a vestige of these fortifications has yet been discovered. It is occasionally mentioned by the prophets, but only to be threatened with destruction. The Lord said, "I will turn mine hand against Ekron;"[3] and Zephaniah declares that "Ekron shall be rooted up."[4] According to Zechariah, Ekron, with other Philistine towns, "shall be very sorrowful, for her expectation shall be ashamed."[5] These are about all the Biblical references to Ekron, but Josephus repeatedly mentions it, both in his "Antiquities" and in the "Jewish Wars." In the Onomasticon it is described as a considerable village, and such it has always continued to be down to the present day.

Instead of going direct to Yebna, let us ascend that high ridge to the south-east of 'Akir, which commands an extensive view of

[1] Josh. xv. 45. [2] 1 Sam. xvii. 52. [3] Amos i. 8. [4] Zeph. ii. 4. [5] Zech. ix. 5.

this part of Philistia. Here are two or three wells below the village which may have belonged to ancient Ekron, and that streamlet with a marshy bottom passes westwards to unite with Wady Sŭrâr towards Yebna. As usual with such brooks, it is so hidden by tall grass, weeds, and flowers that one is floundering in its oozy bed ere he is aware of it.

The season is too far advanced, I suppose, to see this part of the land in its greatest floral beauty, yet our pathway is garnished with many flowers. Along the brook are tall daisies, flaming gladiolus, crimson iris, variegated lilies, gay oleanders, wild roses, geraniums of various shades, and minor flowers in numbers numberless—

> White, and blue,
> And red, and yellow,
> Everywhere beneath our feet.

A month earlier Philistia's wide landscape would certainly have been much gayer than it is at present. But "he must climb high who far would see," and we have a steep ascent to overcome.

Having reached the hill-top, let us rest awhile, and study the topography round us.

The first thought suggested by the outlook is that this region cannot be called a plain at all. Rocky spurs from the eastern mountains stretch a long way westwards, and the general surface of the country is further diversified by high natural tells.

These tells, and breezy uplands, with intervening wadies, form the characteristic feature along the eastern border of Philistia. They rise from one to four hundred feet above the general level of the plain, and furnish picturesque and healthy situations for the villages. Amongst these are many sites whose names remind us of Biblical narratives and incidents of great interest. We have before us the theatre of Samson's marvellous career; and not far from Beth-shemesh is Tibneh, the ancient Timnath, where he found his first Philistine wife, while somewhere on the rugged hills above it he encountered and slew that lion whose carcass, with "a swarm of bees and honey" in it, suggested the fatal riddle which his thirty wedding-companions could not solve, and hence arose the hatred that culminated in so many disasters and tragedies. It was in the

fields below Timnath that Samson turned loose the three hundred foxes with firebrands attached to their tails, which "burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives." To revenge this ruinous conflagration "the Philistines came up, and burnt" his wife "and her father with fire;" and then followed those other bloody conflicts recorded in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of Judges. A little farther south are Shochoh, where the Philistines were gathered for the campaign in which Goliath was slain; and Azekah, to which place Joshua pursued the Amorites after the battle for the relief of Gibeon; and the valley of Elah, where David fought with Goliath of Gath, and slew him. There are also other historic sites round about us, more than we have time at present to mention.

The Biblical narratives of intermarriages, such as Samson's and similar incidents, suggest a topic which has often occurred to my mind. The Hebrews, the Philistines, and the Canaanites appear to have been strangely intermingled for many generations, while, from the account of the conquest of the country in Joshua, one would naturally conclude that nearly the entire heathen population had been exterminated, or at least subdued. The whole land was actually divided by lot between the various tribes, and yet all these places about which we have been talking, and others also, like Gezer and Jerusalem itself, in the very heart of the country, continued in possession of the original inhabitants. The Jebusites held Jerusalem until the reign of David, and Gezer continued to be an independent city of the Canaanites down to the time of Solomon, six hundred years after the Conquest. During these sixteen or eighteen generations there must surely have been long periods of peace and friendly intercourse between the different nationalities.

No doubt; and many incidents in the history of those times necessarily imply this. Amongst them were these very marriages of Samson into Philistine families. Nor were these the only instances of such unions. There was, in fact, an obstinate disposition amongst the Jews to contract heathen marriages. The wisest and best of their kings set the example, and the people were ever ready to imitate them. The zealous Nehemiah bitterly complains of this evil custom: "In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives

of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair."[1] We may therefore conclude that, in matters of less importance than mixed marriages, there was much friendly intercourse between the Hebrews and the Canaanites who still lingered in their ancient cities.

May we not also fairly infer from these and other similar facts that the conquest by Joshua was far less fatal to the inhabitants of the country than the narratives seem to imply? For example, Joshua slew the King of Gezer, but he did not capture the city or destroy the people. The same was true of Jerusalem and her king, and of many other places.

Biblical history should, no doubt, be interpreted by the light of such facts, and universal and sweeping formulas are to be qualified and toned down to accord therewith. Great numbers of the people would certainly flee to those unconquered cities, and to others along the seaboard, where they could find refuge from Joshua's devouring sword. When the wars ceased, they were allowed to return and rebuild their desolated homes. This has been confirmed by what has repeatedly occurred in this country since, and even down to our own time. I have seen Lebanon laid waste by three civil wars. In large districts every village was sacked, every house burned, and yet the number of people actually killed was surprisingly small. This is easily explained: by a few hours' rapid flight the inhabitants reached places of safety in the cities along the coast, or in districts beyond the limits of the war. At such times I have traversed large regions utterly depopulated; yet, when peace had been made, the people soon came back, the villages were rebuilt, and the mingled population, so recently at war, again resided side by side, though the enmity between the parties was scarcely less bitter than was that between the Hebrews and the Canaanites. Something like this occurred, I hope, in the time of Joshua; for it would greatly relieve the horrors of a picture that would otherwise be only too dark and distressing.

[1] Neh. xiii. 23–25.

Some such condition of things was evidently foreshadowed in the original grant of the country to the Hebrews, for Moses says, "The Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little; thou mayest not consume them at once." But the reason assigned for this, both in Exodus[1] and in Deuteronomy,[2] reads strangely in our day: "Lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee." How could this small country be called desolate with two millions of Hebrews dwelling in it, or whence the danger from wild beasts in the presence of such a dense population?

Subsequent history, however, shows that there were large districts uninhabited and infested with the wild beasts of the field. A young lion roared against Samson even in the vineyards of Timnath, and on the mountains above it David slew both a lion and a bear that attacked his flock. These fierce animals were the terror of the shepherd and the traveller in this country, as they still are in Southern Africa and the jungles of India. Gunpowder has exterminated them in Palestine, but they must have been numerous in ancient days, for the Biblical writers were intimately and accurately acquainted with their appearance and habits.

We must now descend from this sunny outlook, and continue our ride westwards across the plain to Yebna.

My thoughts have often followed Philip and the eunuch in their ride across this plain of Philistia, and I have wished to know what sort of country they passed through.

If the eunuch came down Wady 'Aly from Jerusalem, he would follow the road from Lâtrôn southwards, and that is now regarded as the easiest and safest route. If he came by Wady Sŭrâr, entering the plain near Beth-shemesh, he would cross it farther south; and if he descended by Eluetheropolis, his route would be still nearer the southern desert. The tradition that the baptism took place at 'Ain edh Dhirweh, on the road to Hebron, implies that the eunuch was returning home by that more southern route. Another question is whether Philip set out from Samaria or from Jerusalem; most probably from Samaria, as I think, for he appears to have been in that city when he received the command to go.[3] He would

[1] Exod. xxiii. 29, 30. [2] Deut. vii. 22. [3] Acts viii. 5, and 25–39.

then have met the chariot somewhere south-west of Lâtrôn. There is a stream of water, called Marûba, deep enough in some places, even in June, to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends. This Marûba is merely a local name for that part of the great Wady Sŭrâr, given to it on account of copious fountains which supply it with water during summer. I know of no brook on the road from Beth-shemesh to Gaza, but there may be one. Dr. Robinson found water in the wady below Tell el Hasy, which is midway between Beit Jibrîn and Gaza, and on the direct line between them. This route would lead them near, if not quite into, the desert. The same, however, might have been true of either of the routes out in the centre of the plain as it is at this day. Some, perhaps most people, suppose that it was Gaza which was desert, and not the country through which the road passed; and the Greek is as indefinite as the English. But Philip did not go to that city, neither was it desert or deserted at the time when the angel commanded him to take this excursion; nor do I believe it has ever been an eremos—desert—since the earliest days of history. It has often been sacked, plundered, and sometimes burned, and it suffered one of these reverses about thirty years after the journey of Philip; but these Oriental cities spring up from their ashes, like the phœnix, with wonderful rapidity; and I cannot suppose that Gaza itself could, with any propriety, be called desert either then or at any other time from that day to this.

That Philip was found at Azotus, which is Ashdod, after the baptism of the eunuch, seems to imply that it took place not far from that city, which is rather against the idea that they followed the road from Beit Jibrîn to Gaza, since that would carry them many miles south of Ashdod.

These filmy apologies for clouds which lounge about the sky seem to act rather as condensers to concentrate the heat than as a cooling shadow, and there is something extremely oppressive in this hot atmosphere.

We have two kinds of sirocco, one accompanied with vehement wind, which fills the air with dust and fine sand. I have often seen the whole heavens veiled in gloom with this sort of sand-cloud, through which the sun, shorn of his beams, looked like a globe of

dull, smouldering fire. It may have been this phenomenon which suggested that strong prophetic figure of Joel, quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost:[1] "Wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke." "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood."[2] The pillars of smoke are probably those columns of sand and dust raised high in the air by local whirlwinds, which often accompany the sirocco. On the desert of northern Syria, and also in the Hauran, I have seen a score of them marching with great rapidity over the plain, and they closely resemble "pillars of smoke."

The sirocco to-day is of the quiet kind, and they are often more overpowering than the others. I encountered one, years ago, on my way from Ludd to Jerusalem. Just such clouds covered the sky, collecting, as these are doing, into darker groups about the tops of the mountains; and a stranger to the country would have expected rain. Pale lightnings played through the air like forked tongues of burnished steel, but there was no thunder and no wind. The heat, however, became intolerable; and I escaped from the burning highway into a dark vaulted room at the lower Beth-horon. I then fully understood what Isaiah meant when he said, "Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud;"[3] that is, as such heat brings down the noise and makes the earth quiet; a figure used by Job when he says, "How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south wind?"[4]

We can testify that the garments are not only warm, but hot.

This sensation of dry, hot clothes is only experienced during the siroccos; and on such a day, too, one notices the other effects mentioned by the prophet—bringing down the noise and quieting the earth. There is no living thing abroad to make a noise. The birds hide in thickest shades, the fowls pant under the walls with open mouth and drooping wings, the flocks and herds take shelter in caves and under great rocks, the laborers retire from the fields, and close the windows and doors of their houses, and travellers hasten to take shelter in the first cool place they can find. No one has energy enough to make a noise, and the very air is too

[1] Acts ii. 19, 20. [2] Joel ii. 30, 31. [3] Isa. xxv. 5. [4] Job xxxvii. 17.

languid to stir the pendant leaves even of the tall poplars. Such a south wind, with the heat of a cloud, does indeed bring down the noise and quiet the earth.

What is the name of this valley whose meanderings we have been following for the last hour?

It has various names in different places, and, with its many branches, it drains a large part of the mountains of Judah. North of Jerusalem, where it begins, it is called Wady Beit Hanîna. Passing south-westwards, below Kŭlônieh, it descends through a wild, rocky region to the plain, not far from 'Ain esh Shems. Here it is called Wady Sŭrâr, but from Yebna to the sea the name given to it is Nahr Rûbîn. If mentioned at all in the Bible, it is probably the valley of Sorek. Somewhere in this valley Samson found and married his second Philistine wife, the treacherous Delilah, his "accomplished snare," by whom enticed, he weakly yielded up the secret of his great strength, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Judges.

During the great rains of winter this wady sometimes becomes a formidable torrent, but in summer and autumn it dries up altogether, except near the sea-shore, where are some permanent springs. At some time in the distant past it seems to have cut its way through the south end of that sandy ridge north-east of Yebna, leaving bold bluffs in places almost perpendicular. Near the top of the one most conspicuous is a village called el Mughâr, which has been identified by Captain Warren with Makkedah, and afterwards carefully surveyed and described by Lieutenant Conder.

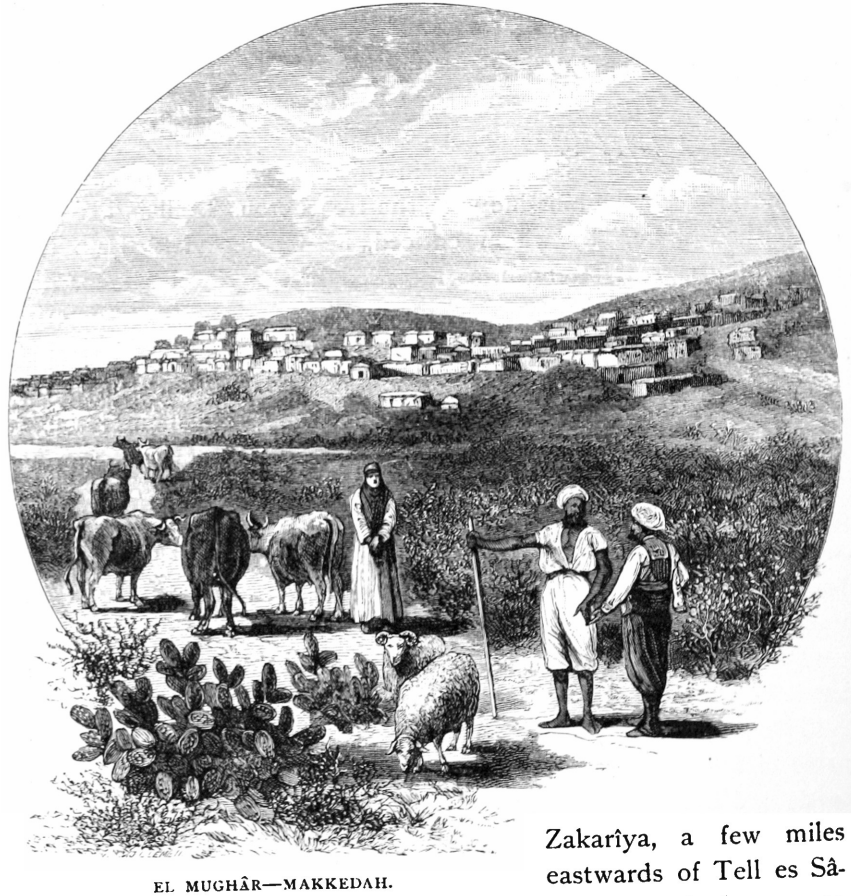
Do you mean the place to which the five kings fled after the battle of Gibeon and hid themselves in a cave?

The same; and I am glad to accept the identification. The name el Mughâr does not resemble Makkedah, but it signifies the caves, and this naturally recalls the tragedy enacted at that place. The location also meets the requirements of the narrative. It is along the line which the routed kings would probably take to reach a safe refuge. The position is strong and commanding, and it was evidently occupied by an ancient city, in which were both artificial and rock-cut tombs and natural caves. In one of these, it is supposed, the kings were discovered; the entrance, we are told, was

blocked up with great stones, by the command of Joshua, and the victorious Hebrews continued the fierce pursuit of their routed enemies.

Where is Azekah, to which one part of the fleeing host was chased by the army of Joshua?

Different sites have been fixed upon by travellers and critics, but the location remains yet to be determined. A place called Tell



EL MUGHÂR—MAKKEDAH.

Zakarîya, a few miles eastwards of Tell es Sâfieh, is marked on some maps as the site of Azekah, but the distance south is a serious objection. It is in Wady es Sŭnt, and the flight and pursuit must have been prolonged for many miles, and over a rough and broken

country, to have reached Tell Zakarîya. I should expect to find Azekah somewhere in or near Wady Sŭrâr; and Lieutenant Conder believes that he has discovered the true site at Deir el 'Ashek, a place on the south side of that wady, and some eight or ten miles eastwards of Makkedah. The position accords well enough with the account of the battle in Joshua; but there is no resemblance in the names, either in form or signification: Azekah is derived from a root that means to dig; and Deir el 'Ashek signifies Convent of the Lover—a very unusual name for any place, especially a convent, and not likely to have been applied to Azekah.

No subsequent history connected with Azekah gives much aid towards determining its true location. In Joshua xv. 35 it is mentioned in a group with Adullam and Socoh, and other places in that part of the Shephelah, or low country, of Judah. The camp of the Philistines was near it when David slew Goliath.[1] Together with many other cities in this region, Azekah was fortified by Rehoboam.[2] In Jeremiah xxxiv. 7 it is stated that "the king of Babylon's army fought against Lachish, and against Azekah: for these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah." This implies that it was then a place of importance. The last mention of it in the Bible is in Nehemiah xi. 30, from which it appears that "Azekah and the villages thereof" were inhabited by the tribe of Judah after the return from the Babylonian captivity.

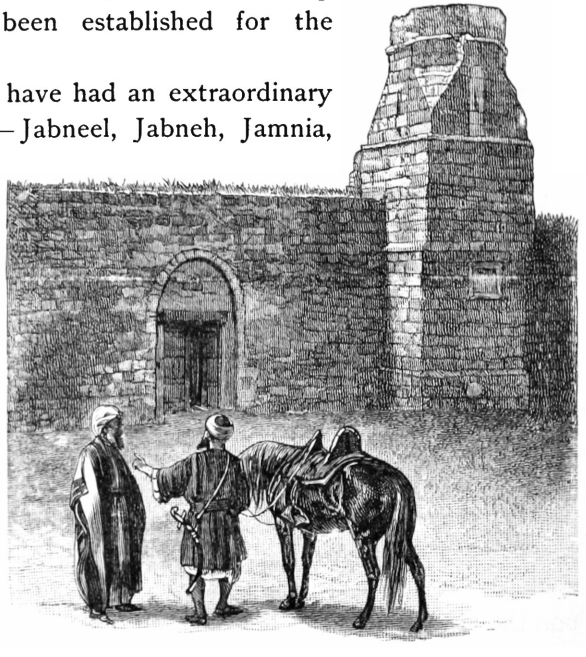
The next place after Makkedah which Joshua attacked and captured was Libnah; and if he did this on the same day of the great battle, it could not have been far from Makkedah, for he returned again to that city, brought out the five kings from the cave, and hanged them on five trees, before the going down of the sun. The achievements of that day have no parallel in history. It must be at least sixty miles from Gilgal to Makkedah, and to march that distance and fight these tremendous battles in one and the same day, without rest or respite, required both miraculous aid and superhuman endurance. No wonder Joshua commanded the sun to stand still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, "until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies."[3]

If Libnah be identical with Yebna, as I think it is, the capture

[1] 1 Sam. xvii. 1. [2] 2 Chron. xi. 9. [3] Josh. x. 12–14.

of it need not have taken much time. The army would merely have to cross over to the south side of Wady Sŭrâr, which could be done in half an hour, and having taken the place, they could easily return to Makkedah, where the camp appears to have been established for the night.

Yebna seems to have had an extraordinary variety of names — Jabneel, Jabneh, Jamnia, Libnah, and now Yebna.



MOSK AT YEBNA.

Yes; and in the book of Judith it is called Jemnaan. Captain C. Warren gives twelve different forms of the name, and identifies them all with this place, though he spells it Ibna. The Crusaders called it Ibelin, or Jebelin, and its history and fortunes have also been varied and remarkable. But we are at the place itself—at least this is Yebna.

It is certainly a sorry-looking village to be the heir of so much history and so many respectable names.

We see it under great disadvantage in this blasting sirocco; but, in addition to its historical celebrity, it has always been a flourishing agricultural village, and is so to this day.

The ancient fortifications of Yebna have all disappeared, and the only edifices of any importance are the partially dilapidated mosks. The main one occupies an elevated position above the village, which local tradition says was once a Christian church, and is chiefly remarkable for its minaret, now in ruins, but which must have resembled the tower at Ramleh. An Arabic inscription on

the minaret indicates that it was built in the seven hundred and eighty-eighth year of the Moslem era, or about the close of the fourteenth century. But though so recently erected, the materials probably belonged to more ancient structures. Lieutenant Conder says that the interior length is forty-nine feet, and the width thirty-two feet. It has the ordinary kibleh, or Moslem prayer-niche, on the south side; but the tradition that it was originally a church can scarcely be true, if its erection was so recent as the end of the fourteenth century, for there is no evidence that Yebna had at that time a Christian population sufficiently numerous to call for such an edifice. Lieutenant Conder discovered two inscriptions on the walls of a mosk, called Abu Harîreh, situated on the west of the village, one of which has the name of Bibars, the celebrated Sultan of Egypt, with 673 A.H. as the date; and the other date, 693, has the name of Melek el Mansûr Kalâwûn. Neither of these mosks claim any pretensions to architectural beauty, and both are evidently of Saracenic origin.

The ancient inhabitants must have had temples and idols in abundance; for when Judas Maccabeus had overthrown Gorgias, he found, under the coats of every one that was slain, things consecrated to the idols of the Jamnites. Then every man saw that this was the cause for which they were slain.[1] Strabo says that Jamnia and its vicinity were so densely inhabited that it sent forth forty thousand armed men. Pliny speaks of two Jamnias—the one before us, and another on the seaboard. This last is mentioned in 2 Maccabees xii. 9; and Judas is said to have set fire to the haven and the navy, so that the light of the fire was seen at Jerusalem!

The sea is about three miles distant, but the harbor has entirely disappeared. On the shore near Tell Rubîn are some traces of ancient fortifications, erected to defend the harbor, which appears to have been a place of importance in the days of Jamnia's prosperity. All the Philistine cities along the coast—Ashdod, Askelon, Gaza—appear to have had similar havens, called Majuma; but they have been swept away, and from Jaffa to the confines of Egypt there is not now a single harbor where even a native boat can find shelter.

From Yebna to Jaffa is three hours and a half. Coming this

[1] 2 Macc. xii. 40.

way, the road leads through fruit-orchards for more than half an hour, and then keeps along the border of vast downs of white sand for nearly two hours to Wady Haneîn, in which are traces of ancient buildings at different places. The remains of Sŭrafend are up that valley to the north-east; and the wady descends to the sea on the north side of Tell Rubîn, where is also a wely of the same



FORTRESS AT YEBNA.

name. A considerable ridge extends back eastwards, spreading out in different directions; and between it and Yebna is a deep valley, through the centre of which descends the brook of Wady Sŭrâr, which turns to the north-west below Yebna, and then unites with Wady Haneîn near Tell Rubîn.

Yebna is situated on and about a hill, which declines west-

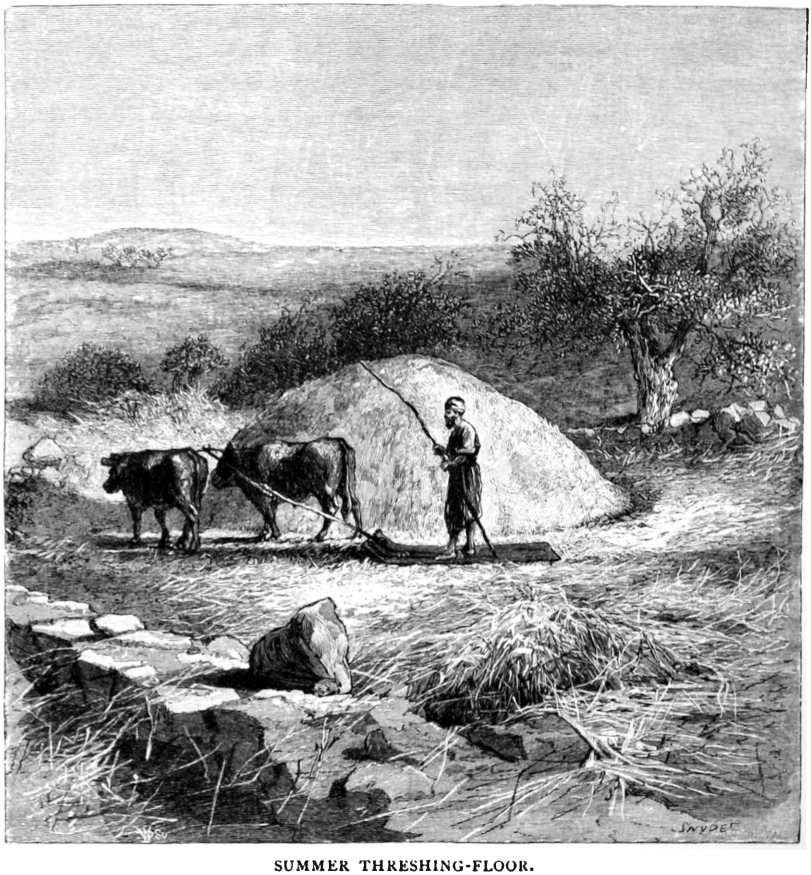
wards towards the sea; and it may contain three thousand inhabitants, all Moslems, and all given to agriculture. Their territory is large and of surpassing fertility. Steam-ploughs would work wonders in the plain of Philistia; and the time must come when they, or something else better adapted to the character of this country, will take the place of the rude native ploughs which have been in use from patriarchal times down to the present day. But, even with this imperfect mode of cultivation, the harvests of Yebna are very abundant. When I passed this way early in June, many years ago, there were hundreds of men, women, and children reaping, gleaning, and carrying the grain to their great threshing-floors. Long lines of camels, bearing on their backs burdens of unthreshed wheat larger than themselves, were slowly converging to the village from every part of the plain; and the grain lay on the threshing-floor in heaps mountain-high.

Some very interesting incidents in Biblical history are associated with threshing-floors. It was at the threshing-floor of Atad that the sons of Jacob made that "sore lamentation" for their father; "wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim," because it was "a grievous mourning to the Egyptians."[1] Gideon was "threshing wheat by the wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites," when "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"[2] "And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing-place of Araunah the Jebusite. And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite."[3] And thus it came to pass that upon this threshing-floor was erected, in process of time, that temple to which the people of Israel went up to worship God for more than a thousand years.

The common mode of threshing is with the ordinary mowrej, which is drawn over the floor by a yoke of oxen, until not only the grain is shelled out, but the straw itself is ground into chaff. To

[1] Gen. l. 10, 11. [2] Judg. vi. 11–14. [3] 2 Sam. xxiv. 16–18.

facilitate this operation bits of rough lava are fastened into the bottom of the mowrej, and the driver sits or stands upon it. It



SUMMER THRESHING-FLOOR.

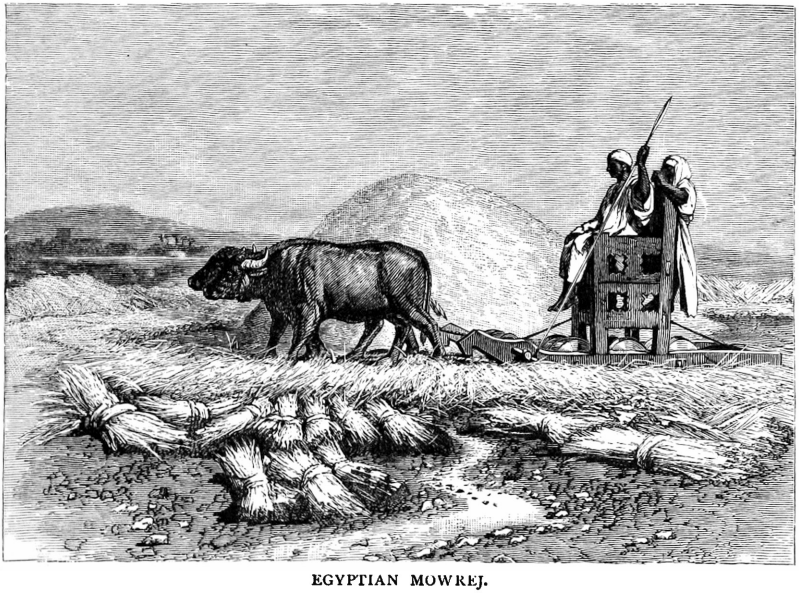
is rare sport for children, and even our own delight, to get out to the baidar, as the floor is called, and ride round upon the mowrej.

Do you suppose that these floors which we see at Yebna and elsewhere resemble those so celebrated in ancient times?

They have, perhaps, changed less than almost anything else in the country. Every agricultural village and town in the land has them, and many of them are more ancient than the places whose inhabitants now use them. They have been just where they are,

and exactly as they were, from a period "to which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." In very many cases the topographical conditions of the sites necessarily decided the place of the threshing-floors. It must be an unoccupied spot near the outside of the village, in a place exposed to the prevailing wind, and sufficiently large for one or more of these floors. Generally there are several in the same vicinity.

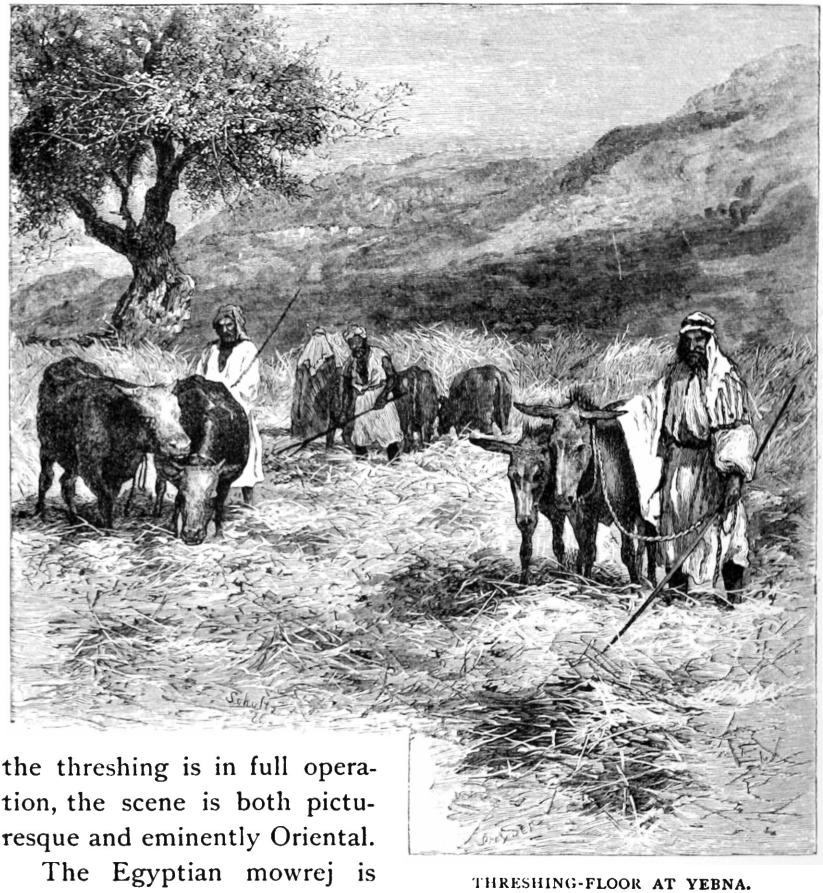
The construction of the floors is very simple. A circular space, from thirty to fifty feet in diameter, is made level, if not naturally so, and the ground is smoothed off and beaten solid, that the earth may not mingle with the grain in threshing. In time the floors, especially on the mountains, are covered with a tough, hard sward, the prettiest, and often the only, green plots about the village, and there the traveller delights to pitch his tent. Daniel calls them summer threshing-floors; and this is the most appropriate name for them, since they are only used in that season of the year. The



EGYPTIAN MOWREJ.

entire harvest is brought to them, and there threshed and winnowed, and the different products are then transferred to their respective places. In large villages this work is prolonged for several

months, but all is finished before the autumn rains, and from that time till the next harvest the floors are entirely deserted; but when



THRESHING-FLOOR AT YEBNA.

the threshing is in full operation, the scene is both picturesque and eminently Oriental.

The Egyptian mowrej is quite different, having rollers which revolve on the grain, and the driver has a seat upon it, which is certainly more comfortable. In the plains of Hamath I saw this machine improved by having circular saws attached to the rollers. It is to this instrument, I suppose, that Isaiah refers in the forty-first chapter of his prophecies: "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff."[1]

[1] Isa. xli. 15.

This passage has several allusions which residents in this country can readily understand.

The sacred writers speak of treading out the corn. Is this mode still practised by these farmers of Philistia?

On some floors here at Yebna, for example, there was no machine of any kind; but boys rode or drove horses, donkeys, and oxen, either separately or yoked together, round upon the grain; and it was this, in part, which made the scene so peculiar. Some ran



THRESHING WITH BLINDERS ON THE OXEN.

from left to right, and others the reverse; and no one continued long in the same direction, but changed every few minutes, to keep the animals from becoming dizzy; while some sought to secure the same result by fastening blinders over the eyes of the bewildered animals; and this practice prevails especially in Egypt.

The command of Moses not to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn is literally obeyed to this day by most farmers, and you often see the oxen eating from the floor as they go round. There are niggardly peasants, however, who do muzzle the ox—

enough to show the need of the command; and Paul intimates that there were some such in the Church in his day: "Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope."[1]

The Hebrew poets often allude to the whirlwind that sweeps away the chaff from the summer threshing-floor. Job, also, had witnessed the boisterous behavior of these winds in his native Hauran, where both they and the chaff they carry away abound; and hence his threatening to the wicked, upon whom "God distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away."[2]

Elihu says, "The whirlwind cometh out of the south." Is that still the case?

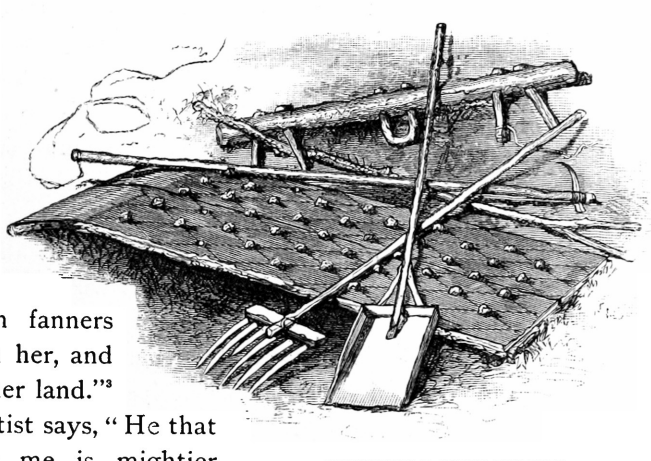
According to my experience, it is, and also that "fair weather cometh out of the north."[3] There is in both statements an indication that the author of them dwelt in the "south country," in which these phenomena are most frequently witnessed, and where I have myself looked earnestly northwards for relief from persevering and relentless rain. With regard to whirlwinds, there is something in the manner in which they catch up the chaff, and whirl it hither and thither, over hill and plain and thorn-hedge, in a sort of manifest fury, that vividly excited the imagination of the Hebrew poets. For example, in the first Psalm, or the thirty-fifth, or the eighty-third, or in Isaiah xvii. or xxix., or Hosea xiii., and elsewhere, every incident is noticed which could intensify the destruction denounced against the ungodly "as chaff of the mountain, chased by the wind, and driven out of the floor by the whirlwind." These whirlwinds are extremely common, and very curious. Without warning or apparent cause, they start up suddenly, as if by magic or spirit influence, and rush furiously onwards, swooping dust and chaff up to the clouds in their wild career.

The intention of the farmer is to grind down his unthreshed grain to chaff, and much of it is reduced to fine dust, which the wind carries away. The references to the wind which drives off

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. [2] Job xxi. 17, 18. [3] Job xxxvii. 22.

the chaff are numerous in the Bible, and very forcible. The grain, as it is threshed, is heaped up in the centre of the floor, until it frequently becomes a little mound, higher even than the workmen. This is particularly the case when there is no wind for several days, since the only way adopted to separate the chaff from the wheat is to toss it up into the air, when the grain falls in one place, and the chaff is carried on to another.

Biblical writers frequently mention the fan in connection with its use on the threshing-floor. The prophet Isaiah, in the thirtieth chapter and twenty-fourth verse, thus alludes to the fan and the shovel: "The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan;" and again, "Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them."[1] Concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Lord saith, "I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land;"[2] and of Babylon, "I will raise up a destroying wind; and will send unto Babylon fanners that shall fan her, and shall empty her land."[3] John the Baptist says, "He that cometh after me is mightier than I: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."[4] Is the fan now seen on the threshing-floors of these Palestinian farmers, and what is it like?



THRESHING INSTRUMENTS.

It is a wooden shovel, generally about a foot and a half in length

[1] Isa. xli. 16. [2] Jer. xv. 7. [3] Jer. li. 1, 2. [4] Matt. iii. 11, 12; Luke iii. 16, 17.

and one foot broad, with a handle sufficiently long for convenient use. In Isaiah xxx. 24 both the shovel and the fan are mentioned as if they were different instruments; but I think the Arabic translation gives the true rendering. The word there translated shovel probably means pitchfork, and both are in common use throughout this country, the fork to turn the grain while the threshing is in progress, and also to toss up the mingled contents, in the first instance, to the wind. But when the chaff is mostly separated from the wheat, the fork is practically useless, and resort must be had to the fan, by which the floor is further purged from earth, gravel, and other impurities.

I never pass through this rude Moslem village of Yebna without recalling some curious facts in its history. From about the middle of the first century Yebna became the centre of Hebrew learning, and after the destruction of the Holy City and temple by Titus, in A.D. 70, this insignificant town here in the centre of Philistia was exalted into a second Jerusalem. It is said that Gamaliel, the grandson of Hillel, transferred hither from Jerusalem the theological college of the Jews, even before the destruction of the temple. After that calamity the Sanhedrim was convened here, and Yebna was for a time both the religious and political centre of the Hebrew people. Hither resorted the wisest of their sages, to teach and lecture to the young rabbies, gathered here from all parts of the world, whither the Jews were dispersed. If we are to believe anything transmitted to after ages through the "tradition of the elders," there must have been at that time a large Jewish population on this plain of Philistia. This at least accords with what is said in the ninth chapter of Acts, about the labors of Peter in this neighborhood. "The saints which dwelt at Lydda," and all they that dwelt at Saron, who saw the miraculous healing of Eneas,[1] were Jews; and so were Simon the tanner, and Tabitha; for Peter had not yet learned "that God is no respecter of persons," but still believed that it was "an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation."[2] We are thus enabled to modify the exaggerations of Josephus in regard to the total destruction at that time of the Hebrew nation. Multi-

[1] Acts ix. 32–35. [2] Acts x. 28, 34.

tudes must have escaped, not only in this region but elsewhere, or the college and the Sanhedrim at Yebna are mere fables. In the interest of humanity, I am glad to believe that the slaughter of the Jews was mainly limited to Jerusalem and a few other places, and that, as in most modern massacres, the larger part of the population did not perish.

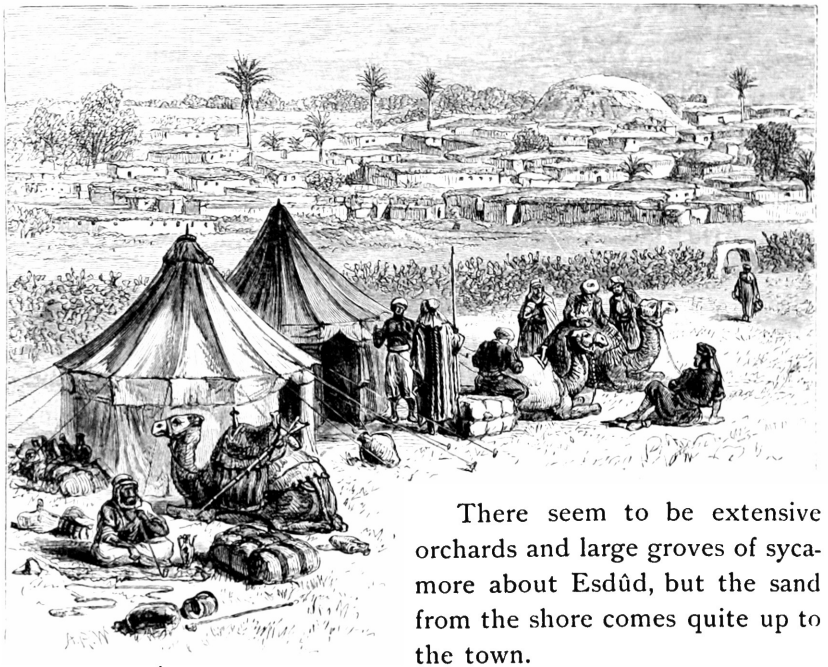
Was this Gamaliel the celebrated teacher at whose feet Paul says he was brought up, "and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God?"[1]

This is the common opinion; and it was he also who gave the cautious and humane advice to the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, recorded in the fifth of Acts, whereby the apostles were "let go" after they had been beaten.[2] The tradition is more doubtful that his father Simeon was that just and devout man who took up in his arms the infant Jesus, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."[3] Even this may be true, for Simeon, son of Hillel, must have then been an old man. We have now said enough to invest Yebna with more interest than its present tumble-down appearance would entitle it.

The Peutingerian Tables make the distance between Yebna and Esdûd, the ancient Ashdod, to be ten miles, and we shall find it two hours and a half fair riding over the level plain. Here is a deep channel coming down towards the sea, with a bridge over it, for which I have no name but that of Wady Esdûd. In the plain above it has various branches, one of which passes down by a ruin called Mukhazin, and another comes from el Mesmiyeh, two hours east of Esdûd. Where it enters the plain from the hills of Judæa it is called Wady es Sŭnt, and is supposed to be the valley of Elah, in which David slew Goliath. Sŭnt means the acacia, and Elah the terebinth; and both names were probably given to the valley on account of the number of these trees that grew in it.

I am glad the day's ride is nearly over, and hope our tent will be under the shady trees near the large ruined khân of Esdûd, on the west of the village, for there alone we shall find refuge from this persecuting wind.

[1] Acts xxii. 3. [2] Acts v. 34–40. [3] Luke ii. 29.



ESDÚ D—ASHDOD.

There seem to be extensive orchards and large groves of sycamore about Esdûd, but the sand from the shore comes quite up to the town.

Yes; and at no distant day it will entirely overwhelm it, and Ashdod will then be nothing but a heap of barren moving sand. The site, however, is protected by those groves, which break the course of the wind, and is further sheltered by an artificial tell, on the eastern side of which most of the houses are built. The tell was probably the acropolis of the old city.

Hot as it is, I must take a stroll round this ancient capital of the Philistines.

As you like; but I have seen enough of it on former occasions to dispense with a further survey in such air as this.

April 14th. Evening.

Well, you are soon satisfied. Did you find the marble columns of the temple of Dagon, or the grassy hill mentioned by Volney?

I saw nothing ancient, and think there is nothing of the kind to be seen except a few old stone buildings stowed away amongst the wretched mud hovels, so as not to be easily examined. The people,

too, are so rude, that I was glad to escape from their impertinent curiosity. The village is surrounded by impenetrable hedges of cactus, and overshadowed by sycamores and other trees, which impart to it a singular aspect. I saw, also, camels drawing up water from deep wells with the Persian water-wheel. The plain eastwards seems boundless, and well cultivated. This is the extent of my discoveries; and there is more evidence of antiquity at this old khân than anywhere else about Ashdod.

You have enumerated nearly everything that is to be seen, and we cannot do better just now than discuss our dinner, which has been waiting this last half-hour.

What does Zechariah mean when he says that a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod?

Complete the quotation, and the idea becomes sufficiently evident—"and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines." No stronger expression of contempt could be selected by the prophet, for a law of Moses declares that "a bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord."[1] Zechariah, in the ninth chapter, to which your allusion refers, foretells the utter extinction of the Philistine people and their power. "The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited;" and Ekron shall be as a Jebusite.[2] That is as one of those tribes doomed to extermination for their iniquities. The present condition of these cities fulfils, in a remarkable manner, these inspired predictions. The king has long since perished from Gaza, Ashkelon is not inhabited, and the pride of the Philistines has been utterly cut off from Ashdod. And yet I would not imply that Ashdod, even in ruins, is destitute of interest. This high and ample mound, I suspect, constituted that impregnable acropolis which it took Psammetichus of Egypt twenty-nine years to subdue. Herodotus says this was the longest siege that any city ever sustained.[3] Ashdod, like Jamnia, had a port, which, like that also, has entirely disappeared. The sea is some three miles distant, and the intervening space is a desert of moving sand, which has now reached the outskirts of the town. If you are anxious to see what vicissitudes this city of Dagon has passed

[1] Deut. xxiii. 2. [2] Zech. ix. 5-7. [3] Her. II. 157.

through, and on what occasions it has played a part in the great drama of history, you can consult Joshua, and 1 Samuel, and 2 Chronicles, and Nehemiah, and Luke, who calls it Azotus in the eighth chapter of Acts,[1] and the Maccabees, and Josephus, who often mention it. The Greek and Roman historians and geographers speak of it, as do also Eusebius, Jerome, and other Christian fathers, under the same name. It figures largely in the Crusades, and, indeed, in nearly all other wars that have ever desolated the country of the Philistines. This long and eventful story proclaims its inherent importance and the tenacity of its life; but it has finally fallen under the heavy "burden" of prophecy, and sunk to the miserable village from which you have just escaped.

The statements of Herodotus appear to me somewhat perplexing, if not incredible. The site has no natural defences, nor are there any visible traces of those fortifications which so long resisted the attacks of Egypt's military power and skill. Besides, Uzziah conquered Ashdod in a single campaign, broke down her walls, and built cities in the surrounding territory nearly two hundred years before the time of Psammetichus. It was again captured by the Assyrians, B.C. 710, as we learn from the twentieth chapter of Isaiah, during that invasion, I suppose, when Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh were sent from Lachish to deliver the haughty and blasphemous message of their master to King Hezekiah, as recorded in the eighteenth chapter of 2 Kings. In view of these facts, I find it difficult to believe that in less than a hundred years after this last invasion the city had again become so wealthy, and the fortifications so impregnable, as to sustain the longest siege on record, conducted by one of the greatest conquerors of that age.

I am not "careful to answer thee in this matter," nor to defend all the anecdotes and fables of that chatty, very entertaining, and generally accurate historian. But the walls of Ashdod were probably made of crude brick. They may have been enormously thick, and have included a considerable area of this fertile plain, so that the besieged could not only obtain abundance of water from their wells, but even raise large quantities of fruit and vegetables. Such walls, when neglected, would, of course, soon crumble back to dust

[1] Josh. xv. 46, 47; 1 Sam. v., vi.; 2 Chron. xxvi. 6; Neh. xiii. 23, 24; Acts viii. 40.

and disappear. What other circumstances there may have been which could render so protracted a resistance possible I know not, nor need we stop to inquire. The surrounding country is not only fertile, but is, even now, crowded with flourishing villages, more so than any part of Philistia. I once came from Lâtrôn diagonally across the country to this place in a little more than six hours. The whole distance must be about twenty-five miles, for I rode fast. For the first hour and a half the country was diversified by alternate fat valleys and low rocky spurs from the mountains west of 'Ain esh Shems. Leaving Khŭlda on a high hill a little to the right, I crossed the brook Marûba—a name for that part of Wady Sŭrâr—and, after following down its reedy bank for a mile, I left it where it inclines to the north-west, and, riding nearly two hours farther, through an ocean of ripe wheat, came to el Mesmîyeh just as the sun set. There I pitched for the night. It is a large agricultural village of mud hovels, packed together like stacks in a barn-yard, and nearly concealed by mounds of manure on all sides of it.

During the night a dense fog settled down flat upon the face of the plain, through which you could not see ten steps; and the scene in the morning was extraordinary and highly exciting. Before it was light the village was all abuzz, like a beehive. Forth issued party after party, driving camels, horses, mules, donkeys, cows, sheep, goats, and even poultry before them. To every body and thing there was a separate call, and the roar and uproar were prodigious. The parties separated in all directions out on the plain, shouting, for the same reason that steamers whistle, blow horns, and ring bells in foggy weather. Ere long all disappeared in the dense mist, and the thousand-tongued hubbub died away in the distance. Taking a guide from el Mesmîyeh, we set out for Esdûd, directing our course a little north of west. It was a strange ride, for, during the gray and misty dawn, we saw camels in the air, and "men as trees walking," and often heard all sorts of noises about us without seeing anything. At length, a sea-breeze coming to the assistance of the sun, the fog began to rise and wheel about hither and thither in fantastic evolutions, until, at the end of an hour, we came out into the clear light of day near

Yâsûr. That village is seated at the south end of a high ridge, is better built, and has more trees about it than el Mesmîyeh, but is not so populous. Turning somewhat to the south of west, we came in half an hour to Bataniyeh esh Shŭrkîyeh, and thence to Bataniyeh el Ghŭrbîyeh, and from this last to Esdûd—two hours and a half in all from el Mesmîyeh, through a country as fertile as it is beautiful.

The account of your ride through the fog reminded me of a passage in Isaiah, where the Lord says, "I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling-place like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."[1]

This latter comparison I have no doubt was suggested by some such cloud as that which I have described. In the morning it absolutely reposed upon the vast harvest-field of Philistia, lying on the corn serene and quiet as infancy asleep. I have never seen such a cloud in this country except "in the heat of harvest." To exactly what natural phenomenon the poetic prophet refers in the preceding clause is doubtful; "like a clear heat upon herbs" is scarcely intelligible in this connection. I at least have noticed nothing of this kind which could suggest the thought of repose and meditation. Nor does it improve the matter to read, "like a clear heat after rain," as it is in the margin. The Hebrew itself is obscure, but in the Arabic it is "like the shining light of noonday." This is very suggestive of retirement to some cool, quiet place of rest, and there are many references to it in other passages of the Bible. I have often been struck with the quietude of sultry noon. The feeble breeze slumbers amongst the tree-tops, and the very shadows appear stationary and dreamy. If the allusion is to these phenomena, it is very expressive indeed.

It is during such rides that one sees life as it is in Philistia. When the fog dispersed the whole plain appeared to be dotted over with harvesting parties. All seemed to be in good-humor, enjoying the cool air of the morning. There was singing alone and in chorus, incessant talking, and laughing long and loud.

The grain is not bound in sheaves, but gathered into large bundles. Two of these, secured in a net-work of rope, are placed a

[1] Isa. xviii. 4.

few feet apart. A camel is made to kneel down between them, the bundles are fastened to his pack-saddle, and at a signal from the driver up rises the patient beast, and marches off towards the threshing-floor near the village. Arrived there, he kneels down again, and is relieved of his awkward load only to repeat the same operation all day long, and for many weeks together, for the Syrian harvest extends through at least two months. On the plain of Philistia it commences in April and ends in June; and this not only gives ample time, but it has this great advantage, that the villagers from the mountains can assist the farmers on the plain, since their own crops are not yet ripe. I was struck with this fact when at el Mesmîyeh. Several Christians from Bethlehem, who had thus come to reap, spent the evening at my tent; and one of them explained to me the advantages derived from thus laboring on the plain. He not only received wages for his own and his wife's labor, but his children were permitted to follow after them, and glean on their own account, as Boaz allowed Ruth to do ages ago in the native village of these people.

In that ride through Philistia I saw many villages built entirely of unburnt brick; and if it was this kind of brick which the Israelites were required to make in Egypt, the manufacture of them was certainly dirty and slavish work.

I have carefully examined the business of brickmaking in its minutest details—in Cyprus, at Antioch, at Hamath, and throughout Syria and Palestine. In all these Oriental regions a considerable amount of tibn, or chaff, is tramped into the mortar with the feet. In Egypt, however, the quantity used is much less, owing, I suppose, to the tenacious property of the Nile mud. I inspected the bricks of numberless ancient buildings in the valley of the Nile —pyramids, fortifications, houses, garden-walls, and the like—and could not understand how the withholding of an almost infinitesimal amount of tibn by Pharaoh could have proved such an intolerable aggravation of the hard service demanded of the Hebrews, nor why they should have been scattered abroad throughout all Egypt to gather stubble—kŭsh, as it is called both in Hebrew and Arabic. This coarse harsh kŭsh is never intermingled with the mortar, either in ancient or modern bricks that I have seen, and is

quite unfit for such a purpose. If this had been required, the poor bondmen would have truly been "in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish aught from your bricks of your daily task."[1] It seemed to me then, and subsequent observation has tended to confirm the impression, that the kŭsh collected throughout all Egypt must have been mainly intended to feed the fires that baked a part of their tale of bricks. I know it is asserted that all burnt brick found in Egypt is of Roman times, but I am not quite prepared to admit this. The burning of brick must have been well known in Egypt, and also the superiority, for many purposes, of such brick over those merely dried in the sun. Not to mention the bricks manufactured in the valley of the Euphrates, we read of brickkilns in this country in the time of David;[2] and Jeremiah was commanded by the Lord to hide great stones "in the brickkiln, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes."[3] This was centuries before the Romans had anything to do with Egypt. The point to be made is this: There were brickkilns in Egypt at an early date. What kind of fuel was employed in burning the brick is now not known. If it was this kŭsh, the amount consumed would be enormous. While ascending the Nile I frequently saw large mounds of straw floated down the river on boat-rafts, and, upon inquiry, was assured that the greater part of it was to feed the furnaces of the Khédive's various manufacturing establishments. Subsequently I examined some of these furnaces; and although I did not find any brickkilns, I did see kilns for burning lime, and at one of them I saw a long train of camels bringing fuel to it. The loads were made up of stubble gathered from cornfields, cotton, rice, and sugar plantations, and from any and every place where such stubble could be collected. It was called kŭsh by those poor workmen; the very word used by the Hebrews, on the banks of that same river, to specify the "stubble" which they had to gather throughout all the land of Egypt, just as these "slaves" of "Effendina," the modern Pharaoh, had to gather their fuel. I went into the vaulted room where the men fed the fires, and found it hot to suffocation, and was compelled to escape immediately. None but a naked Egyptian could endure such heat.

[1] Exod. v. 19. [2] 2 Sam. xii. 31. [3] Jer. xliii. 9.

Now, if the Hebrews were obliged to furnish only a small part of their daily task in baked bricks, we can at once see the intolerable addition to their hard service, if they were compelled to go through the land gathering this amount of stubble wherever they could find it. I venture, therefore, to raise the inquiry whether such may not have been the case, and also the cause of their aggravated misery.

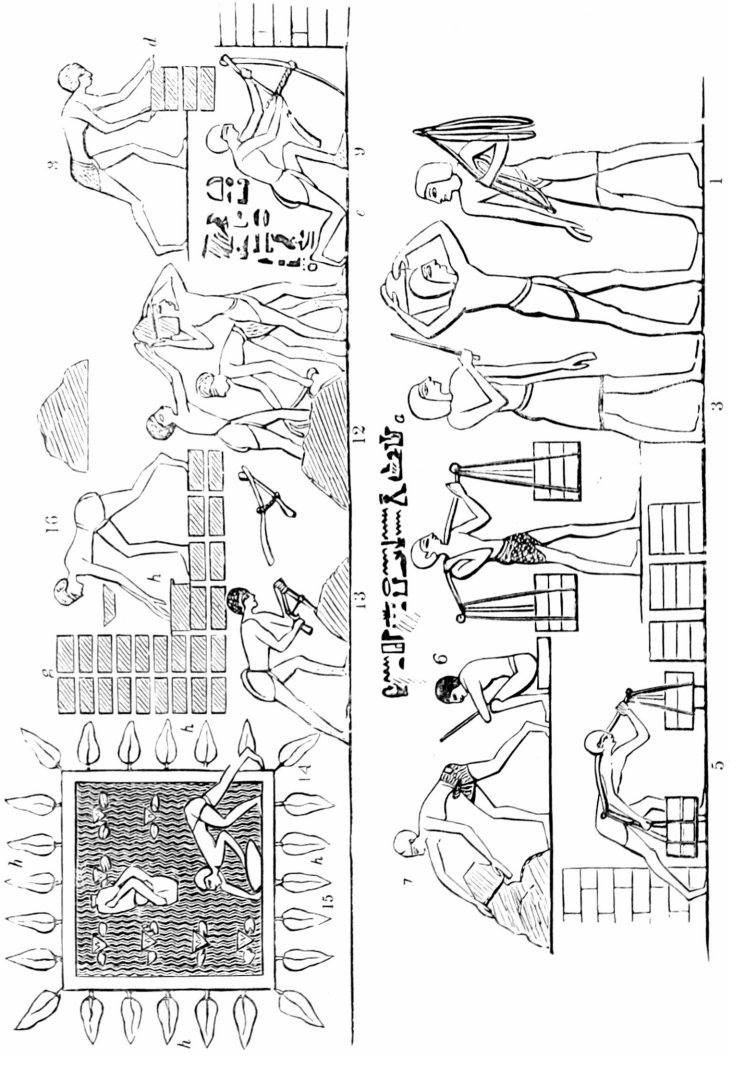
Another thought occurred to me while examining these kilns. Moses and Aaron were commanded to "take handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and sprinkle it towards the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh."[1] What were these furnaces? May they not have been for burning or baking the tale of bricks? At any rate, the fuel that made these ashes was probably this kŭsh which the Hebrews were compelled to collect throughout all the land of Egypt, amidst the sneers, if nothing worse, of their cruel taskmasters. There would be a terrible, almost ironical, requital, if the ashes of the furnace of affliction were made to kindle "boils breaking forth with blains"[2] upon their oppressors.

But to come back from the hypothetical to ascertained reality. I watched with great interest the modern manufacture of bricks all the way up the Nile. The process was very simple. The mortar was made by treading with the feet the black soil on the bank of the river to the proper consistency for moulding. It was naturally free from all extraneous matter that could hurt the feet, and, unless driven by taskmasters, the work need not be either slavish or severe. Only a very little tibn was mixed with the mortar. The moulder, seated on the bank above the river, had the prepared materials brought to him by an assistant, generally a small boy or girl. But one brick was moulded at a time, in a rude form, of the required size; and the mould was emptied and returned by another assistant, who arranged the raw bricks on ground which had been smoothed off, and sprinkled over with the fine dust of the chaff, or tibn, to prevent adherence to the ground. The bricks were then left to dry in the sun, and stacked away for future use. This was the entire process, even when the work was for Effendina, that is, the Khédive, which was very generally the case. The bricks were of vari-

[1] Exod. ix. 8.

[2] Exod. ix. 10.

ous sizes, according to the purposes for which they were required; and the same variety is seen in the oldest remains at Thebes and elsewhere. The common size of those I measured was about twelve



FOREIGN CAPTIVES EMPLOYED IN MAKING BRICKS AT THEBES.

1. Man returning after carrying the bricks; 3, 6. Taskmasters; 4, 5. Men carrying bricks; 7, 9, 12, 13. Digging and mixing the clay or mud; 8, 16. Making bricks with a wooden mould, *d*, *k*; 14, 15. Fetching water from the tank, *h*. At *e* the bricks (ôbi) are said to be made at Thebes.

inches long, eight or nine broad, and a little more than three inches thick; but Egyptian antiquarians mention bricks even twenty inches long and seven inches thick. The quantity of ancient bricks still

in existence is almost infinite, connected with sites and structures reaching back at least to the times of the Hebrews, and may well be considered as the fruit of and witnesses to their bitter bondage.

The entire process of brick manufacture has been portrayed on the monuments, including the "taskmasters," whip in hand, overseeing the laborers; and though in no instance can the figures portrayed be pronounced with certainty to be those of Hebrews, yet they may be, and these life-like pictures singularly illustrate and confirm the narrative in the fifth chapter of Exodus. Wilkinson says, "To meet with Hebrews in the sculptures cannot reasonably be expected, since the remains in that part of Egypt where they lived have not been preserved; but it is curious to discover other foreign captives occupied in the same manner, overlooked by similar 'taskmasters,' and performing the very same labors as the Israelites described in the Bible; and no one can look at the paintings at Thebes representing brickmakers without a feeling of the highest interest." And those who cannot look upon the original paintings of Thebes may, for a few shillings, purchase Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians," which contains a very passable copy of these paintings, with a vast amount of valuable information on this and all other matters Egyptian.

Brickmaking is an art older than authentic history, and was and is still practised by all nations. The earliest mention of it is in the eleventh chapter of Genesis; the scene is in the valley of the Euphrates; and the purpose was to "build a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven." These builders of Babel had slime — that is, bitumen — for mortar; and their bricks were thoroughly burnt, as stated in Genesis, and as can be seen in numerous specimens brought from the ruins of Babylon. In this country, as in Egypt, crude unburnt bricks were generally employed, especially in building the humble habitations of the peasants on such plains as this of Philistia. It would be easy to dig through houses built of these soft bricks, as did Ezekiel when enacting the signs of captivity before the people.[1]

Or as robbers and other bad men, bent on evil errands, did in Job's day.[2] The fact is that these houses are ephemeral, insecure,

[1] Ezek. xii. 5.

[2] Job xxiv. 16.

and every way uncomfortable; low, filthy, and earthy, without light or ventilation, all huddled together; no privacy of any kind possible; no relief from incessant noise from man and beast; no shelter from a burning sun; no escape from clouds of dust; in a word, they are dens of wretchedness and endless discomfort. The natives, however, seem insensible to these annoyances, and are measurably happy. They have, also, some wise and good institutions amongst them. One is the public well, where the water is raised by the sâkieh, at the common cost and for common use. The one near my tent at el Mesmîyeh had four stout mules allotted to it, and was kept in motion night and day. The well was about one hundred and twenty feet deep, and the water cool, sweet, and inexhaustible.

VI.

ASHDOD TO GAZA.

From Esdûd to the Sea-shore.—Mounds of Drift-sand.—Ruined Barrack on the Shore.—Direct Route to Gaza.—Villages along the Road.—Hamâmeh.—Approach to Askelon.—Character of the Site.—Ruins.—Orchards.—Celebrated Fruits and Plants.—Ancient Walls and Towers.—Remarkable Sycamore.—Ride to the Shore.—From Gaza to Askelon by Night.—'Ain 'Askŭlân.—Remains of Ancient Temple.—Broken Pottery.—Derceto.—Worship of the Goddess.—Fish-worship.—Massive Sea-wall.—Ancient Harbor.—Breakwater.—Columns and Foundations of Temples.—Biblical and Historical References to Askelon.—Herod the Great.—Occupation of Askelon by Richard of England.—Modern Askelon, el Jûrah.—Askelon to Gaza.—Mejdel.—Villages on the Plain.—Wady Simsim.—Jebala.—Gaza.—Population.—Sites of Ancient Gates.—Tomb of Samson.—Hârât, Wards.—Site of Ancient Gaza.—Disintegration of Old Building-stone.—Mosk, Deir Hanna.—Sea Visible from Gaza.—Landing for Boats.—Majuma, Ancient Harbor.—Wells.—Commerce.—Antiquity and Vicissitudes of Gaza.—Biblical Notices of Gaza.—Samson at Gaza.—Overthrow of Dagon's Temple.—Hand-mills at Gaza.—Burning of the Philistines' Corn.—The Three Hundred Foxes.—Curse pronounced upon the Serpent.—Fiery Flying Serpents.—Winged Serpents on the Monuments of Egypt.—Brazen Serpent.

April 15th.

YESTERDAY'S sirocco has died away during the night, but we can well endure the loss.

"The tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow."

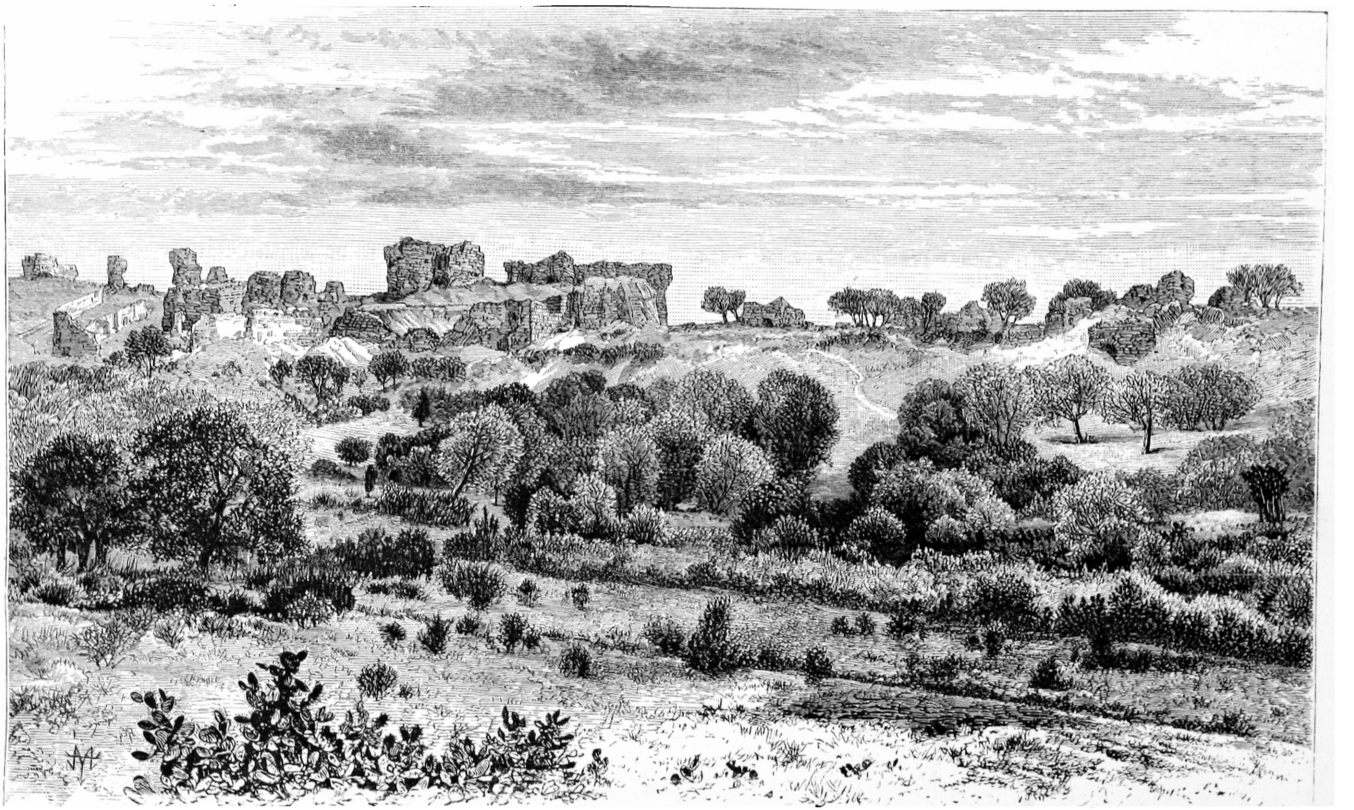
Fortunately for us, it has subsided into a soft south-west wind, without rain, giving us a bright morning and the prospect of an agreeable day. Continuing our pilgrimage, we might pass directly west over these sandy waves to the shore, and follow the pebbly, or, rather, shelly, beach to Askelon; but this would prolong our ride through deep sand for several hours. Nor are there any antiquities along that route worth visiting. The only building between this and the sea is a ruined structure, which may have been a barrack for the coast-guard or a watch-tower; and near it must have been her harbor, if Ashdod ever had such a convenience. I carefully examined

the shore for indications of an ancient haven, but could find none. Captain Warren was not more successful. In his report he says: "I went from here [Esdûd] to the sea-beach, a distance of three miles, in search of any remains of the ancient city; but nothing could I see but endless mounds of drift-sand, over which we stumbled ankle-deep. On the shore itself are the ruins of a rectangular barrack of sandstone, similar to the walls of Askelon, and about the third of the distance on the road to Jaffa. It probably was a station connecting the two cities; it measures about one hundred and twenty by fifty feet, with semicircular flanking towers at each angle, and two on either side. No ancient pottery or glass was observed about, but there were a few broken bottles of modern construction, which looked as if they had once held beer!"

There is nothing in all this that could repay us for a weary ride over such monotonous sand-hills.

Certainly not, and therefore we will follow for several miles the ordinary route to Gaza, and even that will lead us over some of the most advanced waves of the coming sand deluge.

The first village on our left is Beit Dârâs, the next is Jûlis, both of them agricultural towns, prettily situated on the rolling plain. We shall now turn off the regular road to Gaza, which keeps more inland, and proceed to Askelon by that village called Hamâmeh, which is six miles from Esdûd, and, like it, seems just about to be overwhelmed with sand. It is a thriving place, however, and has traces of an antiquity even more prosperous. By the direct line over the sand-hills it is three miles to Askelon from Hamâmeh, but much farther if we follow the regular road. Let us take the former, not because it is the nearest, but because there is something sadly appropriate in thus approaching Philistia's buried capital over such swells and ridges of barren sand. Gardens, orchards, and olive-groves are being swallowed up by this irresistible sand deluge. The modern village called el Jûrah is a little north of the site of old Askelon, and those of its houses which are not made of sun-dried bricks are built out of the fragments of prostrate ruins. It will take us two hours to examine them even hastily, and I give you fair warning that the ramble will be very fatiguing. Salîm is to wait for us under the venerable sycamore-tree, not far from a Mos-



'ASKŬLÂN—ASKELON.

lem wely on the south-east of the ruins; there we will lunch and rest. We will pass down here on the north side to the sea-shore, and there hand our horses to these boys, to be taken to our lunching-ground, for it is impossible to explore the interior ruins on horseback.

Askelon differs from the other celebrated cities of the Philistines, being seated on the sea; while Ekron, Gath, Jamnia, Ashdod, and Gaza are in the interior. It never could have had a harbor of any considerable size, however; and what once existed appears to have been filled up by Sultan Bibars of Egypt, that scourge of mankind, and destroyer of cities in this country. The topography of this place is peculiar. An abrupt ridge begins near the shore, runs up eastwards, bends round to the south, then to the west, and finally north-west to the sea again, forming an irregular amphitheatre. On the top of this ridge ran the wall, which was defended at its salient angles by strong towers. The specimens which still exist show that it was very high and thick, built, however, of small stones, and bound together by broken columns of granite and marble. This clearly proves that it is patchwork, and not Askelon's original rampart. The extraordinary fragments, tilted up in strange confusion along the sandy ridge, especially near the south-east angle, are what generally appear in the pictures of Askelon, and impart such an air of desolation to the view. The position, however, is one of the fairest along this part of the Mediterranean coast; and when the interior of the amphitheatre was adorned with splendid temples and palaces, ascending, rank above rank, from the shore to the summit, the appearance from the sea must have been very imposing. Now the whole area is planted over with orchards of the various kinds of fruit which flourish in this region. It is especially celebrated for its apples, which are the largest and best I have seen in Palestine. When I was here in June, quite a caravan started for Jerusalem loaded with them, and they would not have disgraced even an American orchard. Dr. Kitto has labored, in several of his works, to prove that the Hebrew word taffûah, translated apples, means citron; but I think this is one of his least happy criticisms. The Arabic word for apple is almost the same as the Hebrew, and it is as perfectly definite, to say the least, as our English word, or as the

word for grape, and just as well understood; and so is that for citron, but this last is a comparatively rare fruit in this country. Citrons are large, weighing several pounds each; and the rind or pith is so hard and indigestible that it can only be used when made into preserves. The tree is small, slender, and must be propped up, or the fruit will bend it down to the ground. Nobody ever thinks of sitting under its shadow, for it is too low and straggling to make a shade. I cannot believe, therefore, that it is spoken of in the Canticles. It can scarcely be called a tree at all; much less would it be singled out as amongst the choice trees of the wood. As to the smell and color, all the demands of the Biblical allusions are fully met by the apples of Askelon; and, no doubt, in ancient times and in royal gardens, their cultivation was far superior to what it is now, and the fruit larger and more fragrant. Let taffûah, therefore, stand for apple, as our translation has it.[1]

The sycamore fig grows larger here, and of a darker blue color, than in any other place I have visited. They are gathered, and carried in baskets to Gaza. None of these fruits are ripe yet, but the orchards promise a generous crop. The number of old wells and cisterns still kept in repair enables the peasants to water their orchards and gardens abundantly, without which all would quickly perish. There are no less than thirty-seven wells of sweet water within the ruined walls.

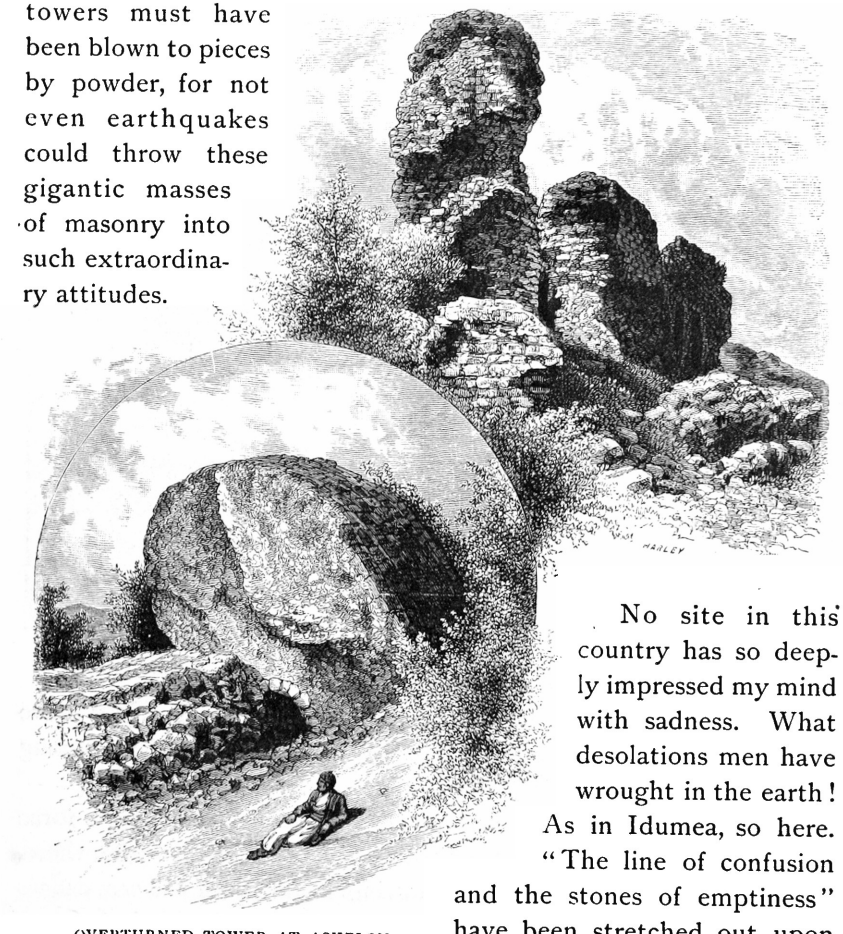
If this place was ever celebrated for aromatic plants, as Strabo, Pliny, and Dioscorides assert, they probably grew on the sand-hills east of the city; but they have long since perished, as has been the case with the fragrant henna, which flourished here beyond any other place except Canopus, as Kendrick tells us in his book on the Phœnicians. Askelon was also famous for a particular kind of onion, the Allium ascalonicum, whence our shallot, which is the wildest of all the cultivated species of the garlic and onion genus. It is mentioned by nearly all the classic geographers who wrote about this city, but I am not aware that it is cultivated by the natives at the present day.

There are no buildings of the ancient city now standing, but broken columns are mixed up with the soil. Let us climb to the

[1] Song ii. 3, 5; vii. 8; viii. 5.

top of these tall fragments at the south-east angle of the wall, and we shall have the whole scene of desolation before us, stretching far and wide, terrace after terrace, quite down to the sea.

The walls and towers must have been blown to pieces by powder, for not even earthquakes could throw these gigantic masses of masonry into such extraordinary attitudes.



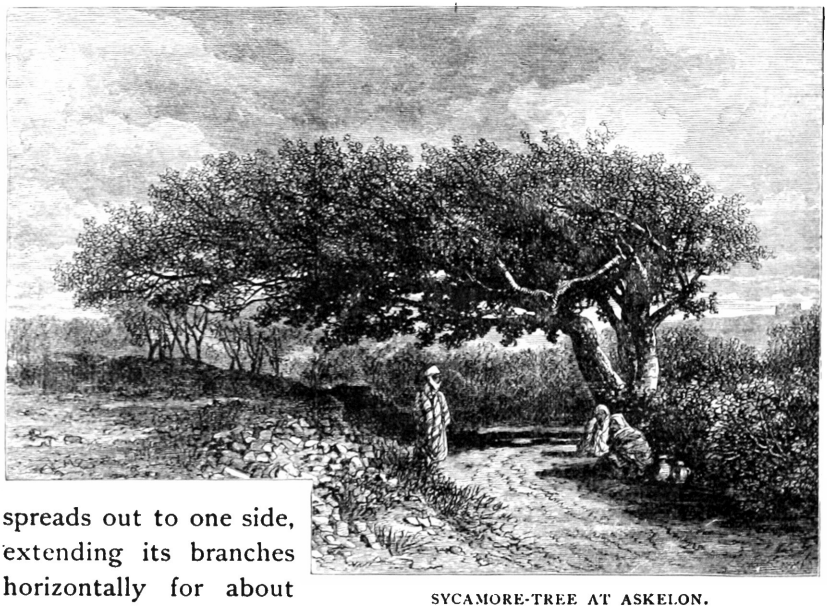
OVERTURNED TOWER AT ASKELON.

No site in this country has so deeply impressed my mind with sadness. What desolations men have wrought in the earth! As in Idumea, so here. "The line of confusion and the stones of emptiness" have been stretched out upon Askelon. "Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow."[1]

[1] Isa. xxxiv. 11, 13, 15.

This is the impression "before dinner." Our lunch awaits us, spread upon the clean sand under that curious sycamore, and the view afterwards may be less gloomy.

What has induced this tree to assume such a singular form? Instead of standing erect and being symmetrical, like other trees, it



SYCAMORE-TREE AT ASKELON.

spreads out to one side, extending its branches horizontally for about thirty or forty feet, and only a few feet above the ground. Zaccheus could easily have climbed into such a sycamore, and looked down upon the passing multitude.

Just such a tree he could scarcely find at Jericho, for the force that bent this sycamore into its present shape does not exist there. The strong and persistent wind, blowing inland from the sea, causes the trees in exposed positions along this shore to assume a somewhat similar form. Even the wild kharnûb, one of the stoutest trees in the land, turns its back to this wind, and, on its western side, declines towards the ground as steeply as the roof of a modern house. Such a wind constantly sweeps over this bold shore of Askelon, and hence the peculiarity of this sycamore, under whose ample shade we are now resting.

Let us ride down to the sea at the north-west corner of the old city, and examine what there may be of interest along the shore. I call your attention to the wells in the vicinity of what appears to have been an ancient gate-way. I once passed this way in winter, coming from Gaza; and as night overtook us long before we arrived here, I ordered the camel-drivers to make for these wells, intending to encamp here. The night being intensely dark, they carried us far beyond, before I was aware of their plan to travel all night along the beach, so as to arrive at Jaffa early in the morning. At last they were compelled to halt at a well called 'Ain 'Askŭlân, on the shore, two miles farther on. We pitched our tents, dined, and slept under difficulties; but I was rewarded next morning by discovering, on the high bluff above the well, the remains of an ancient temple. A large number of granite columns, which must have belonged to a splendid edifice, possibly the temple of Derceto, lay prostrate on the top of the bluff. The position is magnificent; and the never-failing well at the foot of the bluff, the only one on the shore for many a weary mile, may have decided the location of the temple. On the very edge of the bluff, and overhanging the well, is a stratum, several feet thick, of broken pottery, as of water-jars. Whence came they? There is not the slightest indication that there was ever a pottery at this place. May not these broken jars, thousands upon thousands in number, have played a part in the worship of Derceto, half woman, half fish, as she is fabled to have been? Such jars, once used to bring water to her shrine from the well below, could no longer be available for any secular or profane purpose, and were, therefore, broken, as a part of the religious ceremony. Similar rites are enacted by devotees at the shrines of their idolatrous worship, and why not here?

Was not Askelon famous for the worship of Venus under the name of Derceto?

So Herodotus informs us; but if there ever was a deep lake near it, abounding in fish, into which she, ashamed of some of her misdeeds, plunged, and was transformed into a fish, it has totally disappeared. It is a curious fact, however, that there are still sacred fish, kept in consecrated fountains, in several parts of this country.

Is this a remnant of the old fish-worship of Syria, springing originally from, or connected with, these fables about Venus?

I think so; for it is difficult to account for these sacred fish on any other supposition. I have visited several of these fountains, but the largest and most remarkable is situated a short distance north of Tripoli.

You observe, as we pass along the beach, that Askelon presented a perpendicular bluff, in some parts sixty or seventy feet high, which was, doubtless, strongly fortified by a massive seaward wall. The ashlar facing has all been carried off, probably by boatmen, to other cities; but the rubble-work still stands, being bound together by ancient columns placed horizontally, the ends of which project from the rubble, like cannon from the port-holes of a frigate. The harbor appears to have been constructed at the south-west corner, where the enormous south wall, more than fifty feet broad, comes steeply down to the shore. From this point a breakwater was carried out into the sea, horseshoe-shaped, the fragments of which can be plainly seen in calm weather. It seems to me that the actual harbor was within the city, and along the base of this southern wall, which was built on such gigantic proportions in order to defend the haven. Once inside this breakwater, the shipping would be perfectly safe. A low depression, beginning at the shore, near the south-west corner of the wall, extends for some distance within the area of the ancient city, having numerous columns and foundations of temples and other large edifices on either side of it. Here may have been the harbor, but the whole space is now buried deep by the accumulated rubbish of ages; and the truth of these conjectures, and the extent of the harbor, can only be demonstrated by excavating, which would richly reward those who should execute it. Without it we can only guess at the significance of these grand old columns, scattered, as they are, over the surface, or half concealed beneath the ruins of this once splendid city.

The references to Askelon in the Bible are quite numerous. Joshua mentions the Eshkalonites, but the name of the place does not occur in the list of cities assigned to Judah.[1] It was captured, however, by Judah, as stated in the first chapter of Judges. Sam-

[1] Josh. xiii. 3.

son came hither from his marriage-feast in Timnath, "and slew thirty men, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them which expounded the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house."[1] He probably selected this place for his raid because it was thirty miles from Timnath, and in a retired position on the sea-shore. Askelon was one of the five cities that united in sending back the ark, as recorded in the sixth chapter of 1 Samuel. The inhabitants were fanatical idolaters, and bitter enemies of the Hebrews, and equally abhorred by them. David, in his lament for the death of Saul and Jonathan, exclaims, "Publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."[2] Hence, too, the denunciations launched against Askelon by the Hebrew prophets, as in Jeremiah[3] and Amos.[4] Zephaniah says that Askelon shall be a desolation, and so it is.[5] Zechariah declares that "Askelon shall not be inhabited," and it is utterly forsaken.[6] Her ruins are so utterly covered up with the thorny acacia that in many places it is quite impossible to examine them.

This city is also frequently mentioned in the Apocryphal books.[7] Of course, Josephus often refers to Askelon, both in his Antiquities and the Wars of the Jews, as any one can find by turning to those well-known works. Herod the Great was probably born here, though I do not find that fact stated by Josephus, from whom nearly all our information in regard to Herod is derived. The addition of Ascalonites to Herod's name seems to imply that here was the home of his childhood; and if so, his subsequent partiality for the place is fully explained. "He built here baths and costly fountains, as also cloisters round a court, that were admirable both for their workmanship and largeness."[8] His father, Antipater, resided here, as did also Salome, Herod's sister, after his death.

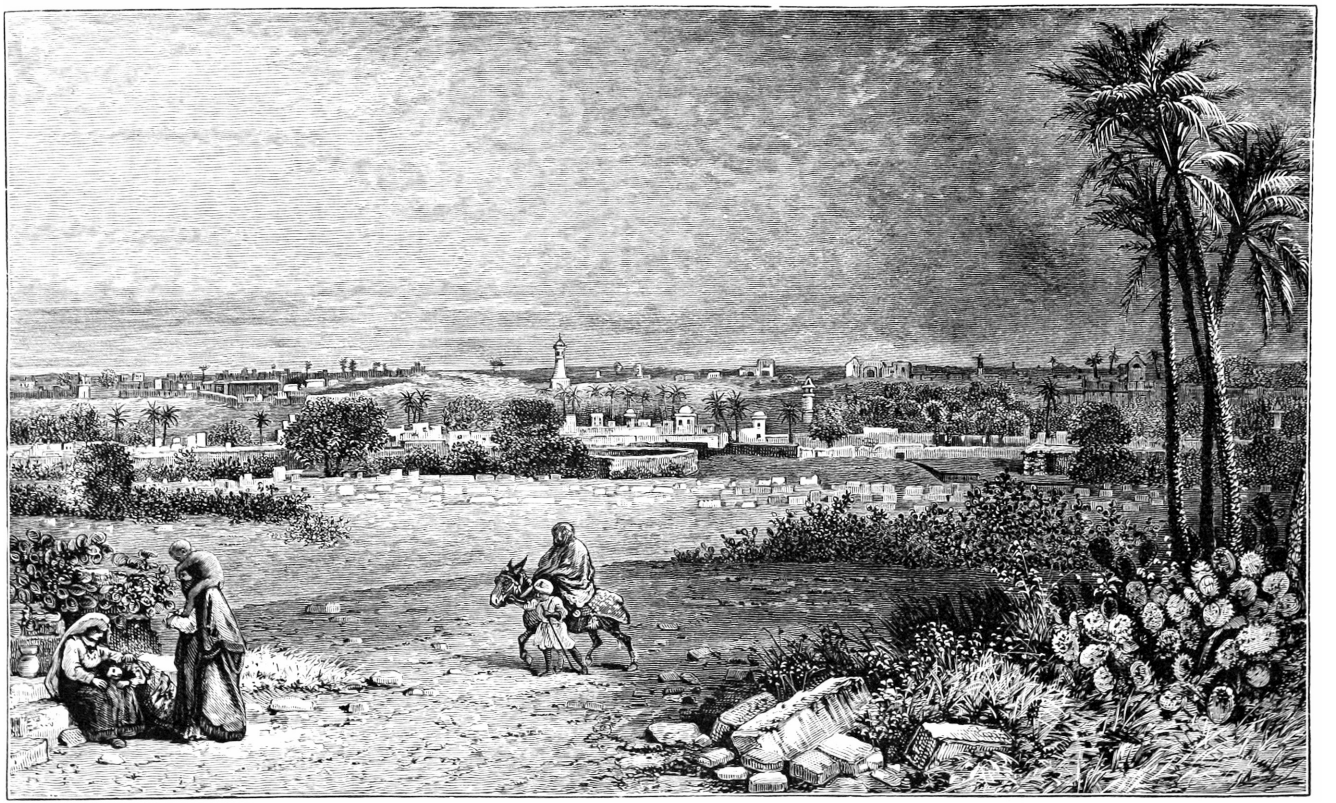
During the Crusades Askelon played a more important part than either Ashdod or Gaza. The celebrated Saladin had regained possession, and strongly fortified it; and after his defeat by the lion-hearted Richard, in the tremendous battle at Arsûf, in A.D.

[1] Judg. xiv. 19. [2] 2 Sam. i. 20. [3] Jer. xxv. 20; xlvii. 5–7.
[4] Amos i. 8. [5] Zeph. ii. 4. [6] Zech. ix. 5.
[7] Jud. ii. 28; 1 Macc. x. 86; xi. 60; xii. 33. [8] Wars i. xxi. 11.

1191, he hastened to dismantle Askelon, lest it should become an important position for the Crusaders. Richard, continuing his victorious march from Jaffa to this place, rapidly repaired and restored its castles, and here held his august court. Five of these castles were of sufficient importance to be mentioned by name in the Itinerary of Richard's expedition: the Tower of the Maidens, the Shields, the Bloody Tower, the Admiral, and the Bedawîn. Some of these huge masses of overturned masonry probably indicate the positions of those towers; and by careful excavations they might possibly be still identified, since the ruins remain to this day very much as the Egyptian khalif, Bibars, left them in the year 1270. No Englishman can visit this deserted and melancholy site without recalling the romantic career of Cœur de Lion.

Askelon will surely be rebuilt at some future day of prosperity for this unhappy land. The position is altogether too advantageous to allow it to sink into total neglect. The inhabitants call the place el Jûrah, but they are acquainted in some degree with the name Askelon and its ancient history, which closely resembles that of its neighbors, Ashdod and Gaza, and may be found in the same books, sacred and profane.

We must now pursue our journey; and for the first hour the road we follow will lead us over this barren ridge to N'alia, a village nearly surrounded by sand-hills. Mejdel, buried up in a forest of tall olive-trees, lies nearly due east of Askelon. It is a large town, with mosk and minaret, and some good houses. It has also a governor and kâdy, and is regarded as a sort of capital for the region about Askelon. The direct road from Esdûd to Gaza passes through it, having Beit Tima, el Jîyeh, and Beit Jerja on the east of it, in the order named. Beit Tima is a considerable distance out on the plain, the others are near the road, and all of them are surrounded by large olive-groves. The next village southwards is Deir Eseneid; and near it is a bridge, broad and substantial, over a deep channel, always dry when I have been here, but which has a vast volume of water during the winter rains. It is called Eseneid from the village, but higher up it takes the name of Wady Simsim. This river does not run north-west, as laid down on some maps, but breaks through the sand-ridge to the sea, west of Deir Eseneid.



GHŬZZEH—GAZA.

Here is Beit Hanûn on our left, and between us and the sea is Beit Lahia, and farther on is Jebala. These villages are famous for their fruit and vegetables, with which the markets of Gaza are supplied. Jebala is a sort of suburb to Gaza, and there a great part of the oil gathered from these immense olive-groves is made into soap. And now the tall palm-trees and taller minarets of this last city of Palestine towards Egypt come into view. We shall seek quarters in a khân, in order to escape annoyance from the rude population. They bear a bad character, and have lately shown symptoms of Moslem fanaticism and insubordination, which render it safest and wisest to avoid all occasion of trouble.

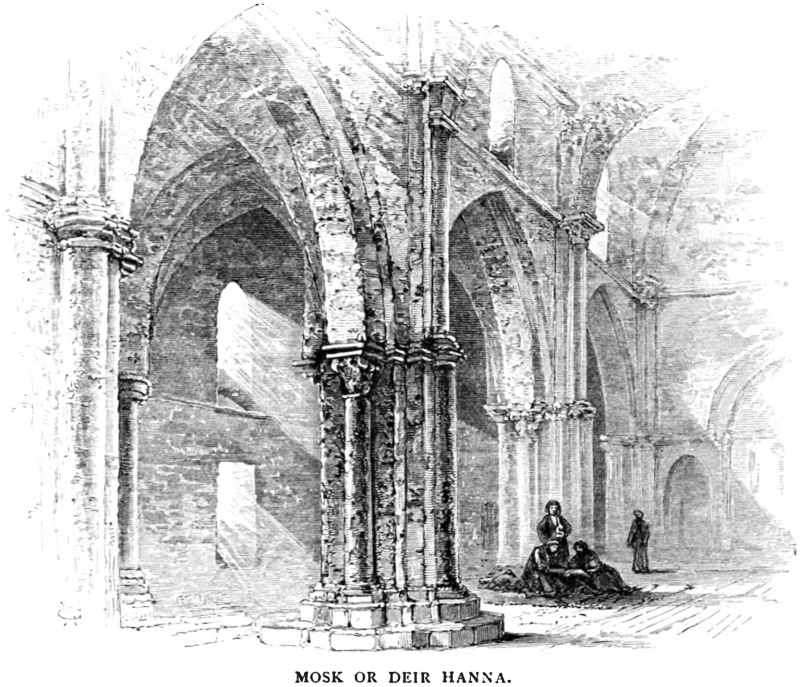
Gaza, April 16th.

We have had a pleasant excursion through the different parts of this ancient and celebrated city. How many inhabitants is it supposed to contain?

Gaza, or Ghŭzzeh, as the Arabs call it, is one of the few cities of Palestine that is steadily growing in population. Hence the estimates continually vary from two thousand by Volney to sixteen thousand by Robinson, and twenty thousand by more recent guesses. I have visited it several times, and find my own estimates each time higher than before. There are now at least seven hundred Christians, and probably seventeen or eighteen thousand Moslems; and future travellers may find reason to place the figures still higher. Both Moslems and Christians assert that Gaza is larger than Jerusalem, and the area covered by its various groups of houses is certainly much greater than that of the Holy City within the walls. Gaza, however, is every way inferior to Jerusalem. It is built partly on an oblong hill of no great elevation, and partly in the valleys south and north of it. There are now neither walls nor fortifications of any kind. Bonaparte is said to have destroyed the castle east of our khân; at any rate, its overthrow is comparatively recent. The sites of certain gates belonging to the ancient walls are still pointed out. The only one of special interest is that which retains the name of Samson, from the tradition that it was from that place he carried off "the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all."[1]

[1] Judg. xvi. 3.

It is on the east side of the central hill of the city; and near it is a mazar, or wely, to his honor, which the Moslems regard as his tomb. Gaza is municipally divided into five hârât or wards. Two are in the broad vale on the south-east, and both are called es Sejarîyeh—woody. These are the new town, and indicate growth and advancement. The other three are et Tuffah—the apple; ed Daraj —the steps; and ez Zeitûn—the olive.



MOSK OR DEIR HANNA.

The original city stood on the hill where the palace, mosks, khâns, and nearly all the stone houses are now situated. This was its position when Alexander besieged and took it, according to Arrian; and granite and marble columns, and heavy old stones, mingled with more recent work, on this hill, go to confirm that fact. This, too, is the tradition of the place, and the people know of no other site for ancient Gaza. There is, however, an old tradition, given by Reland, that the ancient city was deserted, and a new Gaza erected on another spot. Jerome, also, seems to intimate

something of this kind; but perhaps nothing more is meant than that some new suburb was erected around the old site on the main hill, and extending towards the shore, just as the two hârât or wards, called es Sejarîyeh, have arisen in the vale to the south-east of the present town.

An air of decay hangs over Gaza, partly because many buildings are really falling to ruins, and in part because the stone out of which it is built is old, and saturated with saltpetre, which effloresces and disintegrates with great rapidity. A house soon comes to look old that is built of these rotten ruins. On the south-west of the city are the quarantine buildings, erected by the present government out of this same description of stone; and they already show signs of decay. The mosk, most conspicuous for its massive minaret, is believed to have been a Christian church, and is still known by the name of Deir Hanna amongst the Christian population of the town. Dr. Robinson gives a description of this church, and thinks it may possibly date back as far as the beginning of the fifth century. Tradition ascribes it to the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine, and regards it as having been dedicated to St. John the Baptist. This may be true, but there is no reason to believe that St. Helena erected this or any other church in Gaza. To what century modern archæological experts may assign it is of little importance, but it is the most substantial and massive edifice in the city. Lieutenant Conder was allowed to examine it, and he gives these interesting details: "The arches are pointed, and the western entrance is of mediæval character, and very fine. The church consists of four bays, having a total length of 110 feet. The nave is 22 feet wide in the clear, the north aisle 13 feet. The south wall has been pulled down by the Moslems, and a second arcade added on this side; but its outer wall is not parallel with the axis of the church. The style of the capitals is Byzantine, and the semi-pillars of the clere story are much heavier than in most Crusading works; but the arrangement of the windows and roof is mediæval. The pillars supporting the clere story are of a fine brownish marble, and the mouldings of the bases are very well cut."

The building now used as a church by the Christians is evidently modern, and has nothing remarkable about it, except two or three

columns which have been brought here from some other structure. There is, however, nothing ancient in either of these churches.



WESTERN ENTRANCE TO MOSK OR DEIR.

Those travellers are mistaken who say that the sea is not to be seen from Gaza; it is visible from various parts of the city, over and beyond the olive-groves. The present landing-place for boats, some three miles distant, on the shore, is near two welies, called Neby 'Ajlûn and Sheikh Hussân; and in that vicinity was the harbor, the ancient Majuma, now entirely obliterated by the sand-banks, ever on the increase. It has long been a mere open roadstead; and there is no village nor even a magazine on that lone and desolate shore.

The wells at Gaza are very deep, some of them one hundred and fifty feet, and the natives greatly praise the quality of the water. I found the air cool in June, and all agree that the city is healthy. The houses are full of sparrows, and the gardens alive with doves and other birds, which keep up a constant roar of music, aided by rooks in abundance from the tops of the feathery palm. The commerce of Gaza with the Arabs is considerable; but the great trade of the city is in soap, which is carried over the desert to Cairo. They send none by ship, as the sea-air damages the soap. A can-

tar—about five hundred and fifty pounds, and equal to one camel-load — is transported to Cairo for four dollars and a half, though the journey takes fifteen days. Latterly a large trade in wheat, barley, and sesamum has sprung up with Europe, shipped mostly from Jaffa. With a harbor at hand, and a government to protect Gaza from the Bedawîn, it would rapidly rise in importance. It is admirably situated for trade with the eastern tribes of Arabs, and with Egypt. At no very distant day a railroad may pass down from the plains of northern Syria to Egypt, and then again Gaza, as the frontier city, will become populous and flourishing.

Gaza is amongst the very oldest cities in the world. It has participated in all the vicissitudes of good and evil which have checkered the long and eventful history of this country. It is mentioned in almost every book of the Old Testament and often in the Apocrypha, once in the New Testament, and continually in Church history, and in the annals of the Crusades. It was a town before Abraham saw the Land of Promise, and now it is the largest city close to the sea-coast of Palestine. The Pharaohs and the Ptolemies held it as the gate-way to Asia and the East. To the conquerors of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia its possession was essential for their invasions of Egypt. It stopped the fiery career of Alexander for five months, and its burning ruins were finally extinguished by the blood of its brave defenders. Bonaparte conquered it at the beginning of this century, and from it the Egyptian army, under Ibrahim Pasha, took their final departure from Syria, at the dictation of the European powers, in 1840. Through numberless sieges and sacks of lesser note Gaza has held on to life, with a tenacity almost without a parallel, down to the present hour. The name occurs for the first time in Biblical history in the tenth chapter of Genesis,[1] amongst the cities on the border of the Canaanites; and in Joshua[2] it is mentioned that he smote all the people of the land unto Gaza, and also that it was one of the three cities in which alone Anakims still existed.[3] In the distribution of the land it was assigned to Judah;[4] and after the death of Joshua it was actually conquered by that tribe;[5] but they did not long keep possession of

[1] Gen. x. 19. [2] Josh. x. 41. [3] Josh. xi. 22.
[4] Josh. xv. 47. [5] Judg. i. 18.

it, for when it again appears in sacred history, it is as a city of the Philistines,[1] and in connection with the romantic adventures and exploits of Samson.[2]

It was here that Israel's great champion was imprisoned, and made to grind at the mill. To what an abject condition that renowned hero was reduced,

> To grind in brazen fetters under task,
> Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill with slaves!
> Oh, change beyond report, thought, or belief!
> See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused!
> Can this be he
> Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid;
> Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,
> In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools;
> Spurned them to death by troops? The bold Ascalonite
> Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turned
> Their plated backs under his heel,
> Or, grovelling, soiled their crested helmets in the dust.
> Then, with what trivial weapon come to hand,
> The jaw of a dead ass his sword of bone,
> A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
> In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day.
> Then by main force pulled up and on his shoulders bore
> The gates of Gaza, post, and massy bar,
> Up to the hill of Hebron, seat of giants old.

Thus Milton sings his glorious deeds.

Yes, and with what shame, remorse, and horror he is made to bewail his unequalled folly in having divulged the secret gift of God

> To a deceitful woman * * * * Delilah,
> That specious monster, my accomplished snare,
> Who shore me,
> Like a tame wether, of my precious fleece,
> Then turned me out ridiculous, despoiled,
> Shaven, and disarmed among mine enemies.
> Tell me, friends,
> Am I not sung and proverbed for a fool
> In every street?

By far the most wonderful exhibitions of his giant strength he ever made was in this city, not only in walking off with the gates to the top of yonder hill towards Hebron — though any one who

[1] 1 Sam. vi. 17. [2] Judg. xvi. 1–3; 21–30.

knows what the doors of a city gate are will not think this a small achievement—but chiefly in pulling down the vast temple of Dagon, by which he himself perished, with three thousand of his enemies.

I looked at some of the old columns near the brow of Castle Hill with great interest, and fancied that they once formed part of Dagon's temple. It appears that, in addition to the three thousand upon the flat roof, "the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there;"[1] and all were crushed together in one unparalleled calamity. Have you never felt it difficult to believe that such strength could reside in or be put forth by any combination of human bone and sinews?

It was divine power acting through the limbs of Samson. Samson himself, according to Milton, was rather disposed to understate the gift:

> What is strength without a double share
> Of wisdom? Vast, unwieldy, burdensome.
> God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
> How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.

The edifice must have been of enormous size; and it is not easy for me to understand how the tearing of a column or two from so vast a temple could have brought the whole to the ground.

The roofs in Gaza were then flat as they are now, and it does not require a very large space to contain three thousand people, standing as close as they can be packed. A further explanation may be found in the peculiar topography of Gaza. Most of it is built on hills, which, though comparatively low, have declivities quite steep. The temple was erected upon one of these, beyond a doubt, for such was and is the custom in the East; and in such a position, that if the central columns were taken out, the whole edifice would be precipitated down the hill in ruinous confusion. There is such a steep declivity on the north-east corner of the present city, near the old dilapidated castle and palace, and the houses in that vicinity have fragments of columns wrought into the walls and laid down as sills for their gates. Somewhere in that neighborhood, I suppose, the temple stood, and it coincides with this conjecture that the wely of Samson is in a garden a little east of it.

[1] Judg. xvi. 27.

It is one of those pleasant coincidences that here at Gaza, where we read in that ancient story that Samson "did grind in the prison," we still have the same operation ringing in our ears.

The reason is, that this city has no mill-stream near it; there are no wind or steam mills, and hence the primitive apparatus is heard in every street.

How do you understand the story of Samson and his three hundred foxes, as narrated in the fifteenth chapter of Judges? I have often heard it quoted as proof of the incredibility of some of the Bible narratives by sceptics, who deny the possibility of one man's catching so many of those animals.

It is probable that jackals were also included, and these are even now extremely numerous. I have had more than one race after them, and over the very theatre of Samson's exploit. When encamped out in the plain, with a part of Ibrahim Pasha's army, in 1834, we were serenaded all night long by troops of these hideous howlers. But if we must limit Samson's exploit to ordinary foxes, even these are to be found here. It must be admitted, however, that the number seems not only large in view of the difficulty of capturing them, but also far too great for the purpose intended. The object was to set fire to the dry corn which covered the plains of the Philistines. Now, a spark would seem sufficient to accomplish this. During the summer months the whole country is one sea of dead-ripe grain, dry as tinder. There is neither break, nor hedge, nor fence, nor any cause of interruption. Once in a blaze, it would create a wind for itself, even if it were calm to begin with; and it would seem that a less number could have answered all the purposes of Samson; but to this it is obvious to remark that he meditated no limited revenge. He therefore planned to set the fields of many towns and villages on fire at the same moment, so that the people would be confounded and bewildered by beholding the conflagration on all sides of them, and, each being intent on saving his own crop, no one could help his neighbor. Besides, the text implies that certain parts were already reaped, and this would produce interruptions in the continuity of the fields; and, also, we know not the methods of cultivation at that early period. Part of the land may have been permitted to lie fallow, or might have been

planted with "summer fruits," which, being green, would stop the conflagration, and render necessary a greater number of firebrands.

As to the difficulty of capturing so many foxes, we must remember that Samson may have been judge or ruler of Israel at that time;[1] and if we take two or three other facts into account, it will not appear incredible that the governor of a nation could gather such a number of foxes when he had occasion for them. The first is, that in those days this country was infested with all sorts of wild animals to an extent which seems to us almost incredible. This is evident from many incidental allusions in the Bible; but the use of fire-arms has either totally exterminated whole classes, or obliged them to retire into remote and unfrequented deserts. No doubt, therefore, foxes and jackals were far more numerous in the days of Samson than at present. The second fact is, that, not having fire-arms, the ancients were much more skilful than the moderns in the use of snares, nets, and pits for capturing wild animals. A large class of Biblical figures and allusions necessarily presupposes this state of things. Job, and David, and all the poets and prophets continually refer, in their complaints, to snares, nets, pits, etc. We are justified, therefore, in believing that, at the time in question, the commander of Israel could, with no great difficulty, collect even three hundred foxes. He was not limited to a day or a week; and though it may be true that in the whole country there are not now so many killed in an entire year, yet this does not prove that this number could not have been then gathered by Samson from the territories of Judah, Dan, and Simeon, over which his authority presumably extended. We therefore require no correction of the text to render the whole account credible, nor need we call in the aid of miracles. It was merely a cunning device of Israel's champion to inflict a terrible chastisement upon his enemies.

That it was felt to be a most serious calamity is shown by the cruel punishment inflicted upon the indirect cause of it. Not being able to reach Samson, they wreaked their vengeance upon his wife and all her house, and they destroyed them with the same element which had consumed their harvest.[2] And when we remember that, according to Burckhardt, so great is the dread of fire in harvest-

[1] Judg. xv. 20; xvi. 31.

[2] Judg. xv. 6.

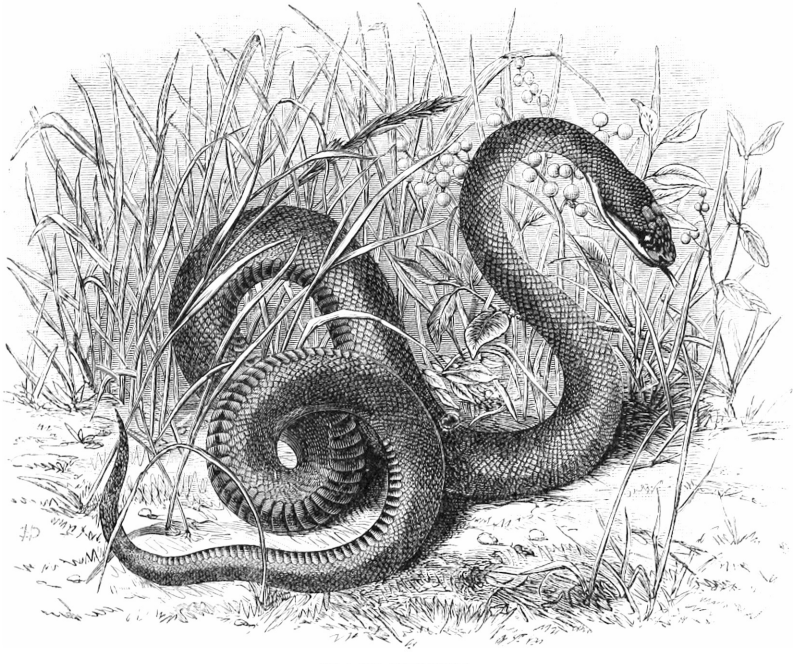
time that the Arabs punish with death any one who sets fire to a wheat-field, even though done by accident, we will not greatly wonder that the Philistines should have thus dealt with the family whose injurious conduct had excited their dreaded enemy to this ruinous exploit.

In wandering over the ruins of this curious city I came upon a large serpent, which had just caught one of those pretty crown-larks. The screams and fluttering of the poor captive drew me to the spot, and I succeeded in killing the snake; but the bird was dead. This adventure reminded me of the curse pronounced upon the serpent in Eden: "Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."[1] Are there any snakes in the East that eat dust or earth? In our country they are carnivorous or insectivorous, gathering their food from the grass, the rocks, the trees, the water—insects, worms, frogs, birds, and mice, while the larger devour squirrels and hares. We know that in Africa and the East the gigantic anaconda and boa crush to death and swallow down whole gazelles and other animals, but I never heard or read of any that eat dust.

A large black serpent, from four to five feet in length, and at least four inches in circumference, is found in all parts of the country, and is frequently exhibited by gypsies and serpent-charmers in their strolling expeditions. In its food and mode of life it does not differ from those of its kind in other lands. The phrase eat dust, perhaps, has a metaphorical meaning, equivalent to bite the dust, which from time immemorial has been the favorite boast of the Eastern warrior over his enemy. To make him eat dust, or, as the Persians have it, dirt, is the most insulting threat that can be uttered. In pronouncing sentence upon the serpent, we need not suppose that the identical Hebrew words were used which Moses wrote some thousands of years afterwards, but the Jewish law-giver was guided to a proverb which fully expressed the purport of that divine commination. We may paraphrase it after this fashion: Boast not of thy triumph over a weak woman, proud, deceitful spirit; you shall be overthrown, and reduced to the most abject degradation. The seed of this feeble victim of thy treachery shall yet plant his heel upon thy accursed head, and make thee bite the

[1] Gen. iii. 14.

dust. This explanation agrees well with the metaphorical manner in which Isaiah uses the proverb. Speaking of the triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom, he says, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat."[1] Then shall this most ancient and glorious prophecy and promise receive its full accomplishment, and the old serpent, with all his evil brood, be made to bite the dust.



BLACK SERPENT.

May we not find in all this an allusion to the manner in which the serpent has always been killed—by crushing his head into the earth?

Moses speaks repeatedly of fiery serpents,[2] and Isaiah mentions fiery flying serpents:[3] are there any such which can properly be said to fly?

The Egyptians seem to have had no hesitation about accommodating serpents with wings. Nothing in their land of wonders astonished me more than the sight of the serpents portrayed on the

[1] Isa. lxv. 25. [2] Numb. xxi. 6. [3] Isa. xxx. 6.

stuccoed sides of the sepulchres of the kings in the valley west of Medînet Haboo. As one gropes his way down the ever-descending tunnels to reach the final resting-place of those august potentates, four hundred feet below, the eye gazes upon the endless convolutions of those winged monsters, running in unbroken, horrid folds from the top to the bottom of those dismal galleries; strange, indeed, and suggestive as strange, to find this exaggerated symbol of sin and death inwreathed around the funeral cortege, as if conducting its victim "down to hell, to the sides of the pit," where lie all the kings of the nations, every one in his own house.[1] Isaiah may have seen similar pictures and representations, for they are far older than his day, and from them elaborated his tremendous "proverb against the king of Babylon."[2]

The Hebrew word for these fiery flying serpents is in every case seraph, and Arabic scholars identify it with a kind that darts with great velocity upon its victim, and, when enraged, against its enemies. It would be an endless and useless task to notice all the Oriental fables in regard to these darting seraphs; but that there are now, or ever have been, serpents that flew in any but a figurative sense, I do not believe. I put no more faith in modern accounts of such phenomena, however respectable their authors, than I do in the astonishing fables of Herodotus, the marvels of Ælian and Plutarch, or the tales of Admiral Anson, M. Le Blanc, and other like travellers, ancient and modern. Moses probably meant nothing more than that the rebellious Hebrews were attacked in the wilderness of the Red Sea by serpents, whose fatal bite occasioned intense pain and burning heat. But whatever may have been the kind of serpent, the occasion was designed to bring about the exhibition of a most striking and significant type of that promised seed of the woman who was to bruise the head of that Old Serpent whose subtlety beguiled the Mother of Mankind and brought ruin on our race, with loss of Eden, and all else of evil signified thereby.

When passing through that great and terrible wilderness, I saw many places well fitted to be the theatre of that unique and mysterious occurrence. And what a scene for the artist does the brief narrative in the twenty-first chapter of Numbers suggest! A high,

[1] Isa. xiv. 15. [2] Isa. xiv. 4, 9.

isolated tell—and there are many such—with the vast congregation wide-spread abroad over the face of the burning desert, perishing with thirst, calling in agony and despair, and finally in wrath and rebellion, for water; for "the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egpyt to die in the wilderness?"[1] Then came amongst them those fiery serpents, and much people of Israel died; but the divine remedy was at hand, and what a strange one it was! A brazen figure of their enemy was lifted up upon a pole, and every one that was bitten when he beheld it lived. And now what wonder and joy throughout the camp. All that were bitten hasten from their tents to look and live. Parents fly with their little ones, and lift their languishing eyes to the miraculous symbol. The aged, the feeble, the dying even, are borne along by relatives and friends from every quarter, and every one that looked upon it revived and lived. See, too, the happy groups returning with shouts of joy and triumph to their distant tents.

There is no call upon us to assume the chair of the critic or the pulpit of the preacher to discover and illustrate the significance of this symbolic transaction. The interpretation of the whole is made sure and perfectly plain by a single sentence of Him who could not be mistaken, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."[2] And so lifted up, may He speedily draw all our sin-smitten race unto Him to look and live.

[1] Numb. xxi. 4, 5.

[2] John iii. 14, 15.

VII.

GAZA TO BEIT JIBRÎN.

Road to Beit Jibrîn.—No important Ancient Sites.—Altered Condition of the Country and the People.—Bedawîn Arabs.—Natural Features of Philistia.—View from Tell el Mŭntâr.—Er Ruhaibeh to Gaza.—Settled Pastoral Arabs.—Their Manners and Customs illustrative of Patriarchal Life.—Arabs at the Well.—Gerar.—Wady esh Sherî'ah.—Discovery of the Site of Gerar.—Tell Jem'a.—Jŭrf el Jerrâr, possible Site of the Patriarch's Encampment.—Themâil, Water Pools.—Wady Ghŭzzeh.—Mounds of Broken Pottery.—Peculiar Cisterns.—Strife between the Herdsmen of Gerar and those of Isaac.—Welis of Rehoboth and Beer-sheba.—Covenant between Isaac and Abimelech.—Permanent Withdrawal of Isaac from Gerar.—He dwells in the Negeb.—Muweilih, Beer-lahai-roi.—Wady Jerûr.—Khŭlasah, Elusa, Chesil.—Sebâita, Zephath, Hormah.—Kadesh-barnea.—Et Tîh, Wilderness of Wandering.—Wady Gadîs.—'Ain Gadîs, Kadesh-barnea.—Does the Site meet the Requirements of the Biblical Narrative?—Eshcol.—Biblical References to Eshcol.—Traditional References to Eshcol.—Isaac's Sojourn in Gerar.—Friendly Relations between Cities and Bedawîn Tribes.—Wells dug by the Patriarchs and Kings.—Towers and Castles to command valuable Watering-places.—Stopping up of Wells.—Names of Ancient Sites perpetuated by Remarkable Trees and Fountains.—Refusal of Edom to allow Israel to pass through his Border.—Purchase of Water with Money.—Washing with Sand.—Scarcity of Water in the Tîh and in Edom.—The Land where the Patriarchs dwelt.—Strange Coincidences in the Life of the Patriarchs at Gerar.—Royal Titles.—Harem.—Domestic Tragedies.—Covenants at Beer-sheba.—Character of Isaac.—Isaac, Rebekah, and Abimelech.—Jacob and Esau.—Isaac deceived by Jacob and his Mother.—Gaza to Beit Jibrîn.—Villages along the Route.—Um Lâkis, Lachish.—'Aijlân, Eglon.—Eglon and Lachish captured by Joshua.—Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar besiege Lachish.—Lachish connected with Moresheth-gath.—Breadth of Philistia.—Road from 'Aijlân to Beit Jibrîn.—Tell Zeita.—Khŭrbet Jett.—Shephela, or Low Country.—The Negeb, or South Country.—Tenacity of Ancient Names in the Negeb.—'Akkûb, Wild Artichoke.—The Galgal of Scripture.

April 17th.

WHAT sort of country have we before us to-day?

Beautiful in itself, but monotonous—wheat, wheat, a very ocean of wheat. Our road to Beit Jibrîn leads diagonally across the territory of Philistia, and offers an opportunity to become familiar with its physical features and its present productions; but there are no

ancient sites of much importance throughout the entire distance, except the 'Aijlân—Eglon—and Um Lâkis—Lachish—of Scripture.

This I shall not regret, for I am fatigued by the effort to trace out the history of extinct races and magnificent cities amongst mud hovels and semi-savage Arabs. Give me for one day the open country, unencumbered with shapeless heaps of rubbish.

I cannot promise, however, freedom from Arabs, not even from Bedawîn robbers; for we ride along the very borders of their desert homes, and they frequently make inroads quite beyond our track. Neither is the country anything like what we understand as virgin soil. It has been ploughed for thousands of years, and probably very much as at present; but in some respects it is quite different now from what it once was. Long, long ago it may have been covered with primeval forests; and there have been ages of prosperity and peace since then, when it was crowded with towns and villages, surrounded by beautiful gardens and orchards. But under Moslem rule most of the land has become the property, not of the cultivator, but of the government; and while this ruinous régime lasts, this country will remain as it is. No man will plant orchards and make improvements on land not his own; but give him a secure title, and, under the crude husbandry of even ignorant peasants, Philistia will quickly recover her ancient prosperity. This, however, will never be realized until the Bedawîn are driven back to their deep deserts, and kept there by a firm and stable government. Neither vineyards, nor fig-orchards, nor vegetable-gardens can exist while these plunderers are allowed to roam at will with their all-devouring herds and droves of camels.

The first time I came into this region I was agreeably surprised to find it neither flat nor barren, nor in any way resembling a sandy desert, as I had been led to expect from reading the narrative of Philip's ride through it with the eunuch. From the distant mountains it indeed has the appearance of a level plain, but the view is so vast that even very considerable hills are lost to the eye. In reality, Philistia closely resembles in appearance some of the rolling prairies of the Mississippi Valley. The country is equally lovely, and no less fertile. I am inclined to believe that, owing to something in the nature of the soil, or of the climate, or both, the sources of its

fertility are even more inexhaustible than in most parts of our own land. Without manure, and with a style of ploughing and general culture which would secure nothing but failure in other countries, this vast plain continues to produce splendid crops every year, and this, too, be it remembered, after forty centuries of such tillage.

Here we are at el Mŭntâr. I have brought you to the top of this high tell, not to honor the mukâm of the saint, nor because this is the "hill that is before Hebron," to which Samson carried the gate of Gaza—though the tradition is probably correct, since it is in the proper direction—but because from it there is a fine view, stretching far away to the south-east, even to the ridge that overshadows el Khŭlîl, as the city of Abraham is now called. Nothing more than this can be intended by "the hill before Hebron," for the town itself is at least thirty miles off, and behind lofty mountains. Be this as it may, I know no one stand-point from which you can survey so much of old Philistia as from this Mŭntâr. We are to pass through the central part eastwards to-day, and can study it at our leisure; but the southern region, quite to the desert, is best seen from here. I once came from er Ruhaibeh, spending the night on the bank of Nahr es Sŭny, where it unites with Wady es Seba', which comes down from Beer-sheba. The rolling plain from that wady northwards to Gaza was then green and flowery as a meadow, and much of it clothed with wheat; but there is not a village along the entire route, and all the grain belonged to tent-dwelling Arabs. We passed many of their encampments, where every kind of work common in ordinary villages was in active operation, and carried on with the same sort of implements. There were, however, as was natural, many more camels and larger flocks than ordinary peasants possess; and these formed a very striking feature in this agricultural tableau. All around us were examples of primitive pastoral life, like those seen on this same plain, I suppose, in the days of Abraham and Isaac. Men, women, and children, clad in garments, and following employments, pastoral and agricultural, like those of the patriarchs. It carried one back, as by enchantment, to the tents pitched in the valley of Gerar in the days of those venerable ancestors of God's chosen people.

These pastoral Arabs present a very interesting study. Unlike

the wandering Bedawîn, their cousins, they are permanently settled on this plain along the seaboard; and their manner of life must closely resemble that of the Philistines with whom the patriarchs associated. We were passing through their encampments for several hours, and were everywhere welcomed as friends. The women were not veiled, nor was there any objection made to our visiting their tents, and inspecting their furniture, their employments, and even their garments. They were far from idle; but, as the harvest had not yet commenced, they were chiefly occupied with their flocks and herds, and in the manufacture of cheese and butter. Some of the women were spinning goat's-hair into strands, to be woven into coarse black material for tent-coverings, rugs, and sacks for the grain. Their spindle was of the most simple kind, being often merely a stone, which they dexterously twirled around until the strand was sufficiently twisted. They can weave without any loom. The threads of the warp are stretched upon the ground, and made fast at either end to a stout stick; and the threads of the woof are passed through with the hand, and pressed back into position by a rude wooden comb.

Boys and girls were scattered over the plain, watching the flocks to prevent them from trespassing upon the wheat-fields. From every camp broad and well-trodden paths led across the plain to the wells, where only the flocks are watered; and I noticed that many of these paths turned towards the sea-shore, probably because water is there found at less depth than in the interior. These wells are the places of public resort, and there one can see and study to the best advantage the appearance, manners, customs, and costumes of these modern Philistines. There they gather, with all their belongings, in groups picturesque and suggestive to the traveller and to the eye and imagination of the artist.

Some singular and even romantic incidents in the history of the Hebrew patriarchs are associated with wells. It was at a well in the city of Nahor, in Mesopotamia, that Eliezer of Damascus, the faithful servant and steward of Abraham, met Rebekah, as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis. It was at a well in "the land of the people of the east" that Jacob first saw his cousin, the "beautiful and well-favored" Rachel, and kissed her, "and lifted

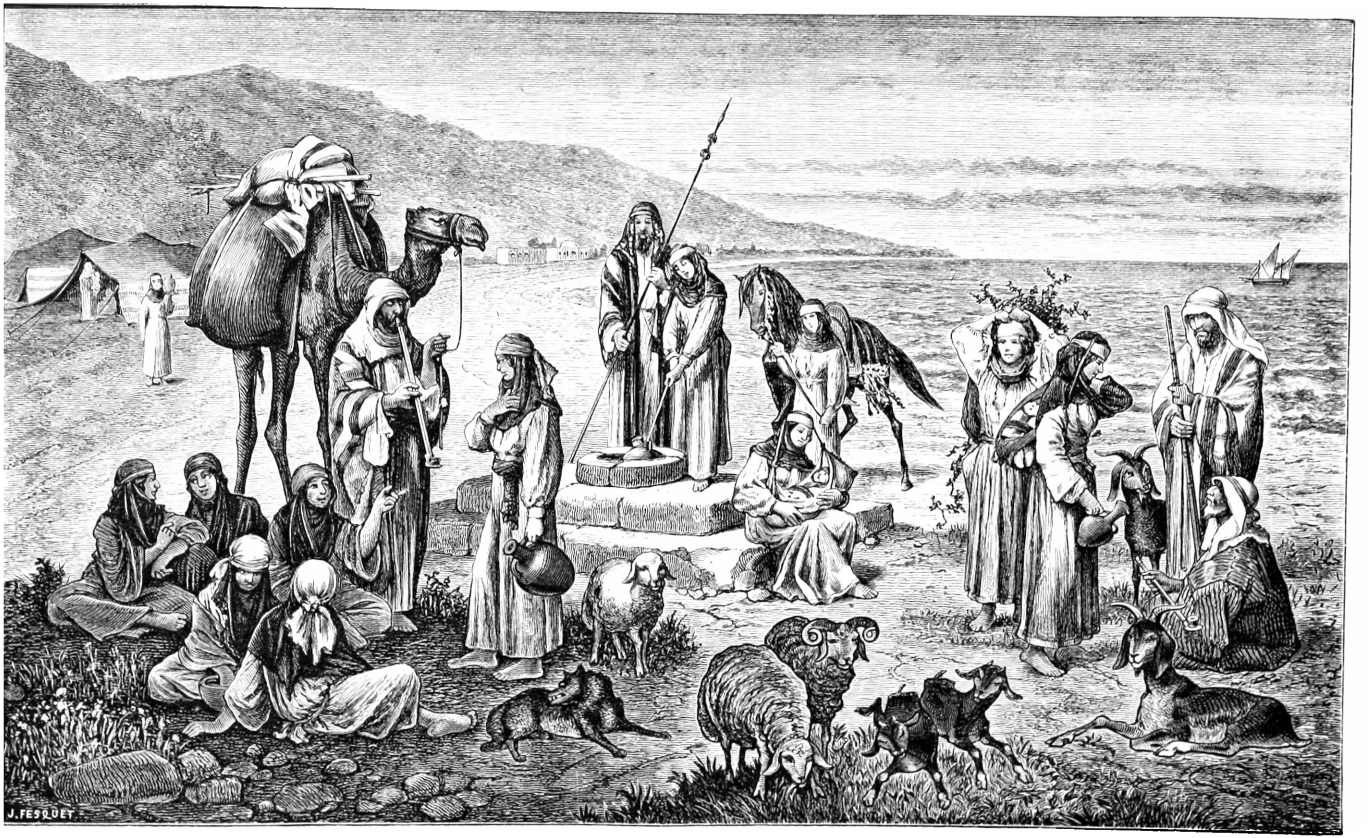
up his voice, and wept."[1] It was also at a well that Moses met Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian, whom he afterwards married, and helped her and her sisters to water their father's flock.[2] Did you notice amongst the tents of these modern Ishmaelites any females of surpassing loveliness that recalled the stories of those celebrated ladies?

No, indeed; still, some of the young people are not wanting in attractiveness. They have good features, bright eyes, forms slender and erect, and a singular ease and grace in the disposal about the person of their flowing garments, and in their attitudes and motions. Doubtless the well is still the favorite trysting-place, as it must have been in ancient days; and any young Bedawy bent on matrimonial alliance would expect there to find the object of his ardent affections.

In what part of this plain was Gerar, where Isaac resided so many years? It seems to have been extremely productive, for he reaped a hundred-fold in that valley: "And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great," as any other farmer would who reaped such harvests.[3]

According to the Onomasticon, Gerar was twenty-five miles to the south of Eleutheropolis. Beginning, therefore, at Beit Jibrîn, and going southwards about seven hours, the traveller reaches the great Wady esh Sherî'ah, called by some Wady Gŭzzeh, and in it, or in one of its fertile branches, the site will probably be found. It is scarcely proper to speak of it as even now unknown. The Rev. J. Rowlands believes that he not only found Gerar, but also Kadesh-barnea. He thus writes to his friend Mr. Williams: "From Gaza our course was to Khalasa. On our way we discovered ancient Gerar. We had heard of it at Gaza under the name of Joorf el Gerar—the Rush, or Rapid, of Gerar, which we found to lie three hours south-south-east of Gaza. Within Wady Gaza, a deep and broad channel, coming down from the south-east, and running a little higher up than this spot, is Wady esh Sheriah, from the east-north-east. Near Joorf el Gerar are the traces of an ancient city, called Khirbet el Gerar—the Ruins of Gerar. Our road beyond Khalasa lay along a plain slightly undulating. This plain must be

[1] Gen. xxix. 1, 9, 11, 17. [2] Exod. ii. 15–17, 21. [3] Gen. xxvi. 12, 13.



ARABS AT THE WELL.

the land of Gerar. Here we sojourned for two days, one of which was Sunday, with Abraham in Gerar."

This is rather a meagre account of such a celebrated and unknown region and city.

True, but we will add something to it. Tell Jem'a, the possible site of Abimelech's city, is about three hours south of Gaza; but if there ever were buildings upon it, they must have been constructed of crude bricks which dissolved into common soil, for there is not even a stone of any size upon or about it. The name also is Jem'a, and not Gerar; but a short distance north of it is a shallow and rather broad valley, called Jŭrf el Jerrâr, which is believed by many besides Mr. Rowlands to be the actual site of the patriarch's encampment. Jerrâr is the Arabic for Gerar, and the valley has at least this much in favor of the identification. Captain Warren visited it in 1867, and it was subsequently surveyed by Lieutenant Conder. He searched in vain for the wells which Abraham dug in the valley of Gerar, and which Isaac reopened when he dwelt there; "for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them."[1] The Arabs now obtain water merely by making shallow excavations, which they call themâil, in the bed of the valley; but these are neither wells nor permanent springs, and could not have been such as the wells which the patriarchs dug. I remember, however, that I found precisely the same kind of shallow themâil in Wady Useit, representing the twelve wells in Elim to which the Hebrews came on the way to Sinai.[2]

The name Jŭrf el Jerrâr must be applied to the precipitous earthy banks of the valley of Ghŭzzeh, the bed of which is about two hundred yards wide—wide enough, therefore, to allow of the patriarch pitching his camp in it; and even at this day the spot is sometimes occupied by encampments of Arabs. As pronounced by them, the name Um el Jerrâr is supposed to mean Mother of Jars, suggested, perhaps, by the mounds of broken pottery visible on the bank of the wady. The heaps of pottery are very curious; they are semi-consolidated by the infiltration of mud, and are some ten feet high. A peculiar kind of cistern, of which there are more

[1] Gen. xxvi. 18.

[2] Exod. xv. 27.

than a dozen scattered round the site, is constructed of small stones. They are circular, and have domes four or five feet in diameter and six or eight feet deep, and are now used for storing grain, but probably they were originally intended to hold rain-water. These cisterns are evidently not ancient, and could have had no connection with the patriarchs. The only other relics at Um el Jerrâr are a few marble tesseræ, generally the sign of a church or convent, and some bits of glass. So far, therefore, there is nothing indicating an ancient city at Um el Jerrâr, unless it be the pottery-heaps which may mark an old mound such as exist in many towns and villages in Palestine.

If Tell Jem'a marks the site of Abimelech's city, Jŭrf el Jerrâr seems to be much too near it to accord with the Biblical narrative: "Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there."[1] This implies a removal to some place quite distant, and therefore Jŭrf el Jerrâr is not the valley in question, or the city of Abimelech must have been somewhere else than at Tell Jem'a. Isaac, however, did not remain permanently in Gerar. He dug wells in different localities, and left them because "the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours."[2] The well named Rehoboth is believed to have been at er Ruhaibeh, which is many miles south-east of Tell Jem'a. After digging this well Isaac went up to Beer-sheba, where he must have resided for a considerable time; for he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord. Abimelech, with Phichol, his chief captain, came there to negotiate a treaty of peace with Isaac. The covenant was ratified by a feast. "And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace." And that same day his servants, who were digging a well, told him that they had found water; "and he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day."[3]

It seems evident, from the narrative, that Isaac had entirely withdrawn from the neighborhood of Gerar: "Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?"

[1] Gen. xxvi. 16, 17. [2] Gen. xxvi. 20. [3] Gen. xxvi. 23–33.

Yes; and, so far as known, he never returned to Gerar, but moved about from place to place, and always pitched his tent many miles distant from Abimelech's city. He dwelt in "the south country," that is, in the Negeb, and was encamped at the well Lahai-roi when Rebekah was brought to him from Mesopotamia.[1] If this Beer-lahai-roi was at Muweilih, as appears probable, Isaac was then residing near the extreme south border of the Negeb; and a short distance beyond that is Wady Jerâr, which may have derived its name by transfer from the Gerar of Abimelech. On my way from Sinai I examined Wady Jerâr with much interest, but it is too sandy and barren to have been a suitable dwelling-place for Isaac's immense flocks and herds.

From Joorf el Gerar Mr. Rowlands travelled southwards, passing by Khalasa, or Khŭlasah. Dr. Robinson identifies it with the Greek Elusa; but Mr. Rowlands thinks it marks the site of the Chesil of Joshua xv. 30, one of the cities in the south of Judah. Both may be correct. Mr. Rowlands does not seem to have been aware that Dr. Robinson not only visited the place, but gave an extensive description and history of it. Our fortunate traveller, passing across the desert from Khŭlasah to Suez, came, in two hours and a half, to an old site called Sebâita, which he identifies with Zephath, called Hormah—"utter destruction"—in Numbers xxi. 3, where the Israelites vowed a vow to utterly destroy the place, on account of the attack of King Arad; and subsequently, in Judges i. 17, after Judah and Simeon had overthrown it, this name "destruction" was attached to it a second time. Mr. Wilton, in his book on the Negeb, had already made the same identification. Near this place Mr. Rowlands mentions a well, called Bir Rohebeh, and the ruins of a city with the same name, which he has no doubt was the Rehoboth of Genesis xxvi. 22. The ruins are extensive, and in remarkably good preservation. Ten camel-hours (twenty-five miles) farther towards Suez, Mr. Rowlands came to Muweilih, which he believes, for half a dozen reasons, to be Beer-lahai-roi, where Hagar found water, and called it after the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Lahai-roi—Thou God seest me.[2] Our traveller is now in the vast wilderness of Paran, called also wilderness of Kadesh, so famous in early

[1] Gen. xxiv. 61–67.

[2] Gen. xvi. 7–14.

Bible story, and he discovers more than one interesting locality. We shall only refer to Kadesh-barnea. He finds it twelve miles east-south-east of Muweilih; and as he stood at the base of the rock that was smitten by Moses, and gazed upon the beautiful brook of delicious water still gushing forth from it and leaping down into the desert in many a lovely cascade, he was quite wild with enthusiastic excitement, and well he might be, with his firm faith in the identification.

This part of et Tîh, as the vast Wilderness of Wandering is now called, has been recently visited and described by those intrepid travellers Palmer and Drake, and they have brought to light many lost sites, and cleared away much of the obscurity which has for so many ages enveloped that houseless desert. When I was at Mr. Rowlands's Muweilih, I made diligent inquiries about Kadesh; but both our own Arabs and other Bedawîn we met in the neighborhood were either absolutely ignorant of such a place, under any possible pronunciation of the name, or they purposely concealed their knowledge of it. Palmer and Drake, however, believe that they have discovered the true site in Wady Gadîs, some ten miles or more south-east of Muweilih. The only description given by them that I have seen is singularly brief and unsatisfactory; for if 'Ain Gadîs be in reality the Kadesh-barnea in the wilderness of Paran, mentioned in Numbers xiii. 26, and elsewhere, it is one of the most interesting sites in the entire history of the Hebrew Wanderings. They thus describe it: "The 'Ain Gadîs discovered by us consists of three springs, or, rather, shallow pools, called Themâil by the Arabs, one of them overflowing in the rainy season, and producing a stream of water. It is situated about lat. 31° 34′, long. 40° 31′, three miles above the water-shed of the valley of that part of the previously unexplored mountain plateau of the 'Azâzimeh, where this falls suddenly to a lower level, and, as we found on subsequently passing through it, is more open, less hilly, and more easily approached from the direction of 'Akabah, and is thus situated at what I should call one of the natural borders of the country." They suppose that Mr. Rowlands did not visit this place at all; "but he seems to have applied the name wrongly to 'Ain el Gudeirat, some miles farther northwards." One sadly wants a lit-

tle more information in regard to several points. Is the country around 'Ain Gadîs adapted for the permanent encampment of the Hebrews? Is the supply of water from these shallow pools adequate to meet the wants of the whole nation, not for a day, but for months at a time? Is not the site much too far south to agree with the topographical requirements of the Biblical narrative? In regard to the first two inquiries, they give but little information; and to meet the last supposed difficulty, they suggest that Eshcol, whence the cluster of grapes was cut, was not in the valley near Hebron, but some place in the neighborhood of this 'Ain Gadîs; since, as they rightly conclude, it would be impossible to carry grapes for so many days through the desert.

This location of Eshcol near 'Ain Gadîs will scarcely agree with the two narratives of the transaction given by Moses in Numbers xiii. 21–25, and in Deuteronomy i. 19–28, where that brook, or, more properly, wady, of Eshcol appears to be associated with Hebron. So, also, in Numbers xxxii. 9, the valley of Eshcol was the place where the spies appear to have been terrified by the appearance of the land and the people, where dwelt the giants, the sons of Anak; and we know from Joshua xv. 13, 14, and elsewhere, that Hebron was the proper home of the Anakim. Again, we find the name Eshcol attached to the neighborhood of Hebron in the days of Abraham; for one of his confederate chiefs, who aided to rescue Lot from Chedorlaomer, was Eshcol, the brother of Mamre the Amorite.[1] Now, as Mamre gave his name to "the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron," it is highly probable that Eshcol gave his name to the valley in which he resided, near Hebron.[2] Van de Velde was told by the governor of Hebron that there was an 'Ain Eskali, fountain of Eshcol, in a valley a short distance north of Hebron, "whose water was accounted the best in the world." It is a curious fact that, owing to certain ambiguities in the Mosaic narratives, all ancient traditions place Eshcol north of Hebron, as you can see by consulting the Onomasticon, Benjamin of Tudela, and other authorities. It will be very difficult at this late day to reject these traditions, which, I believe, have been accepted by modern travellers and critics, so far, at least, as to locate Eshcol in the neighborhood

[1] Gen. xiv. 13, 24.

[2] Gen. xiii. 18.

of Hebron, and not several days' journey to the south of it. This is a topographical question of considerable importance in its bearing upon the site of Kadesh, and, indeed, upon much of the subsequent journeyings of the Hebrews during the thirty-eight years of their wanderings in the wilderness. If the location of Kadesh at 'Ain Gadîs necessitates the transfer of Eshcol several days' march southwards from Hebron, I think that the identification will not be readily accepted.

We must not wander any longer in the wilderness, but resume our history of Isaac's sojourn in Gerar, which is both curious and instructive. Combining pastoral and agricultural industry, it is not strange that he grew very great. The vast grazing plains around and south of his position enabled him to multiply his flocks indefinitely, while the "hundred-fold" harvests furnished bread for his numerous servants; and, in addition to these advantages, the blessing of the Lord was on the labor of his hands in a manner altogether extraordinary. These things made the Philistines envy and fear him; and therefore Abimelech, king of Gerar, demanded and obtained a covenant of peace with him. Just so at this day the towns, and even cities, such as Hamath and Hums in the north, and Gaza and Hebron in this region, cultivate with care friendly relations with the sheikhs of the great tribes on their borders.

The country was deficient in water, and wells, dug at great expense, were regarded as very valuable possessions. Isaac was a great well-digger, prompted thereto by the necessities of his numerous flocks; and in those days this was an operation of such expense and difficulty as to be mentioned amongst the acts which rendered even kings illustrious. Uzziah, king of Judah, "digged many wells: for he had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains."[1] The strife for the possession of wells was a fruitful source of annoyance to the peaceful patriarch, as it had been the cause of separation between Abraham and Lot before him; and such contests are now very common all over the country, but more especially in these southern deserts. It was the custom in former times to erect towers or castles to command and secure the possession of valuable watering-places. Thus Uzziah "built towers in the

[1] 2 Chrôn. xxvi. 10.

desert," apparently in connection with "his many wells;" and to stop up wells was the most pernicious and destructive act of vengeance, the surest way to convert a flourishing country into a frightful wilderness. Israel was commanded thus to destroy the land of the Moabites by stopping all the wells of water.[1] Water is so scarce and valuable in that region that the places where it is found are all well known to the Arabs. It would be a curious inquiry for the explorer to seek out those wells dug by the patriarch, nor would it be surprising if they should be found still bearing the significant names which he gave them. "Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi," as we read in Genesis xxv. 11, and xxiv. 62—the same that was so named after the appearance of the angel to Hagar.[2] It may have been first discovered by her, or miraculously produced by the God that saw her for the salvation of the maternal ancestor of the Arab race and her unborn son, as the fountain of Kadesh afterwards was for all Israel,[3] and perhaps that of "En-hakkore, which is in Lehi," for Samson.[4] It seems to have been the usual mode to designate the dwelling-place in patriarchal times, and, indeed, long after, by some circumstance or fact which made it memorable; and it is yet quite common to find a village better known by some remarkable tree or fountain near it than by its proper name. The knowledge of these places and things is perpetuated from generation to generation; and I doubt not many of these wells in the south could be discovered, if one had time and liberty to explore.

This matter of wells and their importance reminds me of the churlish refusal of Edom to allow the Hebrews to pass through his land. "The children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the highway: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it."[5] But he refused to give Israel passage through his border. Have you ever been obliged to purchase water with money while travelling on "the highway" in that part of the land?

Frequently, and it is often difficult to be had either for love or money. A friend of mine informed me that, passing through a part of the country east of the Jordan in the autumn, he could barely secure the water absolutely necessary for his animals; and

[1] 2 Kings iii. 19, 25. [2] Gen. xvi. 14. [3] Numb. xx. 11.
[4] Judg. xv. 19. [5] Numb. xx. 19.

the article was so precious that all washing, even of his own face, was dispensed with for several days.

Perhaps it was in view of such emergencies that Muhammed allowed his disciples to use sand instead of water in their ceremonial ablutions.

No doubt; and we may readily admit that a "washing" with sand is just as efficacious as with water, but my friend's face would not have been greatly refreshed by such an application.

As to the negotiation of Moses, any one at all acquainted with the countries through which he sought a passage will understand the propriety of his offer to purchase water, especially for the cattle. Some of the tribes had vast flocks and herds; and when I was traversing the regions of their wanderings in the Tîh and in Edom, the great and ever-recurring puzzle was to discover by what means their cattle were kept from perishing with thirst. In the present condition of these lands it could not be done, except during the rainy months of winter. We may have occasion to refer to this subject hereafter, on the other side of Jordan. We are now passing through the land where the patriarchs dwelt; and the history of their sojourn, brief and fragmentary though it be, abounds in interesting anecdotes and incidents.

How do you account for the strange coincidences in the patriarchal connections with Gerar? Both Abraham and Isaac came from Beer-sheba to that city; both adopted the same prevarication in regard to their wives, for the same reason, and with the same result. It would appear that these ladies must have been beautiful in comparison with the darker daughters of Philistia, and this even when they were far advanced in life. Both were taken into the harem of the king, and both rescued by similar divine interpositions. The king, in either case, was called Abimelech, and each had a chief commander called Phichol. Both Abraham and Isaac made covenants with these Abimelechs; the place of meeting in both cases was a well; and from the "seven ewe lambs set by themselves" that day the well was called Beer-sheba—the well of seven, or well of the oath.

It is fair to conclude that Abimelech was the royal title, just as Pharaoh was in Egypt, and Cæsar in Rome. Phichol may also

have been a name of office, as mudîr or mushîr is now in this country. If one of these officers is spoken of, his name is rarely mentioned. I suppose it was the custom of these Abimelechs to augment their state and glory by introducing into their harem illustrious ladies, and that without much respect to their age. To enable them to do this they sometimes killed their husbands, and such things are not unknown even in our day. I could point to more than one such instance among the feudal nobility of Syria, in which the husband was killed in order to get possession of the wife; and such tragedies must have been still more frequent in the age of the patriarchs; for it was the fear of a like calamity which led both Abraham and Isaac to resort to the culpable deception which is recorded of them. Abraham, at least, was a man of great courage, experience, and wisdom; and it is quite impossible that he should have acted as he did towards the wife he so loved from mere groundless apprehensions. And though Abimelech, when terrified by the visions of God, earnestly protested his innocence, yet he had already sent and taken Sarah, assuredly against her consent, and sorely against the wish of Abraham; and I feel certain that the divine warning, "Thou art but a dead man," had more to do with the restoration of Sarah than any feelings of remorse in view of his sin. However this may be, it must be admitted that the conduct of both patriarchs, and their wives too, does them no honor, and is almost incomprehensibly weak and absurd.[1] As to the other repetitions in the record of similar acts, there is no difficulty in understanding them. After the lapse of many years, it would be quite in accordance with Oriental usages for the successors of the first Abimelech to renew the covenant of peace with Isaac, who had grown so great as to be both envied and feared. The mode of contracting alliance was the same, because in both cases an established custom was followed; and that the well should have been twice named Beer-sheba from this double transaction made at it, is not surprising. It may have been intended, also, by that divine providence which guided all such proceedings of the patriarchs, to settle, by these remarkable acts, a well-known point, to determine in future ages the southern border of the Promised Land.

[1] Gen. xx. and xxvi. 6–11, 26–33.

The character of Isaac is very marked and peculiar. He never travelled far in any direction during his long life of one hundred and eighty years. There are but few acts of his life on record, and several of these are not much to his credit. He seems to have been an industrious, quiet man, disposed to wander alone and meditate, at least when he had such an interesting theme to think about as the coming of the camels with his expected bride. He preferred peace to strife, even when the right was on his side, and he was "much mightier" than those who annoyed and injured him. This silent submission to injury was objected to by Abimelech in the question of the wells, and with much apparent justice. The king, when reproved about those which his servants had violently taken away, replied, in substance, "Why did you lay up this grudge in your heart all this while? You should have had more confidence in my justice; and, instead of tacitly implying that I was a party to this violence, you ought to have reported the case to me. I do not feel flattered by this concealment, nor very well pleased that it should be cast in my teeth on this particular occasion." The same injurious suspicion is more prominent in Isaac's conversation about his wife. He there distinctly states his apprehension that Abimelech was a lawless tyrant, who would not stick at murder in order to get Rebekah into his harem. Neither Isaac nor Rebekah appears to advantage in this discussion with Abimelech. I say appears, because it is by no means certain that the king was not capable of doing just what Isaac feared; while Isaac would sooner have lost his right hand, or even his life, than be guilty of such enormous wickedness. And it is often the case that a very bad man may be able to set his conduct in such a light as to seem more honorable and generous than those much better than himself. This should be remembered when we study the exhibitions of character made by Jacob and Esau at their meeting in Gilead. Esau carries off the whole credit of the interview, and his brother seems cold, suspicious, cunning, unbrotherly. And while I do not pretend to admire certain traits in Jacob's character, yet he was far more upright and religious than Esau. Jacob knew him and his four hundred men too well to venture into his society and power. Hence all the shuffling and backing out, and even deception, which he

gave in return for his injured brother's forgiveness, warm-hearted welcome, and generous offers of assistance. Jacob dared not accept them, and yet to reject them under such circumstances could not but place him in great embarrassment.

How could Isaac have been so grossly deceived by Jacob and his mother?

He was not only blind, but very old, so that he could not distinguish with accuracy, either by the touch of his shrivelled hand or by the ear, now dull of hearing. It must be further remembered that Esau was, from his birth, a hairy person. He was now a man, full-grown, and, no doubt, rough and shaggy as any kid of the goats. Jacob was of the same age, and his whole history shows that he was eminently shrewd and cunning. He got that from his mother, who on this occasion plied all her arts to make the deception perfect. She fitted out Jacob with Esau's well-known clothes, strongly scented with such odors as he was accustomed to use. The ladies and dandies in ancient times delighted to make their "raiment smell like the smell of a field which the Lord had blessed;" and at this day they scent their gala garments with such rich and powerful spicery that the very street along which they walk is perfumed. It is highly probable that Jacob, a plain man, given to cattle and husbandry, utterly eschewed these odoriferous vanities, and this would greatly aid in the deception. Poor old Isaac felt the garments, and smelled the still more distinguishing perfumes of Esau, and, though the voice was Jacob's, yet he could not doubt that the person before him was—what he solemnly protested that he was—his first-born. The extreme improbability of deception would make him less suspicious; and, so far as the hair and the perfume are concerned, I have seen many Arabs who might now play such a part with entire success.

All this is easy and plain in comparison with the greater fact that this treachery and perjury, under most aggravating accompaniments, was in a sense ratified and prospered by the all-seeing God of justice.

It is well to remember, however, that though the blessing, once solemnly bestowed, according to established custom in such cases, could not be recalled, yet, in the overruling providence of God, the

guilty parties were made to eat the bitter fruit of their sin during their whole lives. In this matter they sowed to the wind, and reaped the whirlwind.

We set out on this line of remark by saying that in several of the known incidents of Isaac's history, few though they be, he does not appear to advantage. Even in this transaction, where he, now old, blind, and helpless, was so cruelly betrayed by his wife and deceived by his son, he is at fault in the main question. He was wrong, and Rebekah was right, on the real point of issue; and, what is more, Isaac's judgment in regard to the person most proper to be invested with the great office of transmitting the true faith and the true line of descent for the promised Messiah was determined by a pitiful relish and longing for "savory meat." Alas for poor human nature! There is none of it without dross; and mountains of mud must be washed to get one diamond as large as a pea.

We have taken no note of time during this long digression, nor have I even observed the face of the country.

Not much lost thereby, for our track has been the ordinary road to Beit Jibrîn. After emerging from the great olive-grove north of Gaza, we had Beit Hanûn on our left; then Dimreh, on the same side, upon the bank of Wady Simsim, and Nijid on the south of our path. The village we have just passed is Simsim, and this one to which we are coming is Bureir. Time from Gaza, three hours; direction, north-east; country, a rich, rolling, agricultural plain. Our next village is Um Lâkis, which, I have little doubt, derives its name from the Lachish so celebrated in Bible story and prophecy. The city itself seems to have been more to the south, and nearer Beit Jibrîn, according to the Onomasticon and other notices. Even that is not certain, however, and the great similarity of name, for a site so close to the locality of the ancient city, is not to be forgotten. There are names in this direction of villages, ruins, old sites, tells, and wells sufficient to fill two pages. None, however, seemed to be of any historic interest except 'Ajlân and Um Lâkis. We shall come to 'Ajlân, believed to be the site of ancient Eglon, in half an hour; and Um Lâkis is about two miles to the right of our path. There are no ruins at either of these places to remind one of ancient glory, but the same remark applies to all the sites

on this plain, and that for two reasons: the cities were built chiefly of unburnt brick; and such parts as were of stone were either taken from the soft arenaceous formation which is found along the coast, or from that cretaceous rock which is so characteristic of these southern hills of Judæa, and which is often nothing more than indurated marl. We are not, therefore, to expect ruins; and the name, with a tell of greater or less height, composed of such débris, pottery scattered over the neighborhood, and a well or two, with a sarcophagus or a stone trough — these are the things by which we identify old sites in Philistia.

For what were those cities, Eglon and Lachish, celebrated in Bible history?

As to Eglon, its celebrity begins and ends with that memorable day when "the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it."[1] The king of Eglon was one of the five confederates who fought against Israel; and Joshua, you will remember, having defeated the whole five, who then fled to the cave of Makkedah, marched first against Libnah, then against Lachish, and finally against Eglon, all of which cities he took and destroyed, and the latter so effectually that it seems never to have recovered much of its former importance, for we hear no more of it in subsequent history.

Lachish had a different fate, and a more prolonged existence. True, it was also captured and destroyed on that day unparalleled for length and slaughter; but it revived again, and figures largely in later wars. It appears to have been a place hard to take, for even victorious Joshua spent two days in capturing it. And it is worthy of special notice that, although both Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Lachish, as we read in the eighteenth chapter of 2 Kings and the thirty-fourth chapter of Jeremiah; yet it is not said in either narrative that they succeeded in taking the city. Indeed, it is rather implied in the eighth verse of the nineteenth chapter of 2 Kings that Sennacherib had abandoned the siege of Lachish, and gone against Libnah. Perhaps Rehoboam, who rebuilt and fortified it, amongst

[1] Josh. x. 13, 14.

other cities had rendered the place impregnable, so that neither Assyrian nor Babylonian could prevail against it, although they besieged it, and all their power with them, as Sennacherib is said to have done.[1] Lachish was an exceedingly strong place; and this is corroborated by the legends found by Mr. Layard on slabs belonging to the palace of Sennacherib at Kouyunjik, and which have been deciphered to this effect: "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment, before the city of Lachish; I give permission for its slaughter." There is also sculptured a representation of the siege; and the city portrayed, after the Assyrian fashion, on these slabs is believed to be Lachish itself—a fact, if established, of singular interest.

At what time or by what agency Lachish was finally destroyed is wholly unknown. Micah seems to threaten it, but the passage in chap. i. 13–16 is unusually obscure, even for this obscurest of prophets; and I can make nothing out of it except that, in some way or other, it was to be connected with Moresheth-gath, as subject to it, or as bringing presents to the god of that city. The site of Moresheth-gath is probably still found a short distance southwards of Beit Jibrîn; and this, in fact, favors the identity of Gath and Beit Jibrîn.

We need not enter upon topics here, on this wide and houseless plain, which can be discussed more satisfactorily on the spot. Besides, the day is wearing away, and we must quicken our pace, or we shall be out in the desert later than is exactly pleasant or even safe. The whole distance from Gaza to Beit Jibrîn, at our rate of riding, is nine hours, or about twenty-five miles. This may be taken as the utmost breadth of the proper territory of the Philistines.

The road we have followed thus far from 'Ajlân is destitute of villages and barren of historic sites. That high tell to which we are now coming, with a village on its northern side, is called Zeita, and it is an hour thence to Beit Jibrîn. The interest of this region begins with this tell, which bears about it decided indications of antiquity. Farther towards Beit Jibrîn is a site with the suggestive name of Khŭrbet Jett—Ruin of Gath. But of this more hereafter.

We have been all day crossing the plain of Philistia, the eastern

[1] 2 Chron. xxxii. 9.

part of which is mentioned eighteen or twenty times in the Bible, under the general name Shephelah, rendered in English by vale, as in Deuteronomy i. 7; or valleys, Joshua ix. 1; or low plains, 1 Chronicles xxvii. 28; or low country, 2 Chronicles xxvi. 10. The last, I suppose, is the more correct translation, and is now generally adopted. In this wide sense the Shephelah included the territory originally given to the tribe of Dan, and also a considerable part of western and south-western Judæa. At an early day the tribes of Dan and Simeon were practically absorbed by Judah, and hence we find in the fifteenth chapter of Joshua many cities in the Shephelah which belonged to that tribe. Beyond this, southwards, is another large region, extending westwards from Wady el 'Arabeh to the Mediterranean, called Negeb in the Hebrew, and generally translated South or South Country. It is, however, a geographical term, as distinct as Shephelah; and in many places Negeb should not be translated as in Genesis xiii. 1, where Abraham is said to have come up from Egypt "into the south," whereas he actually came northwards. The word is Negeb. Again, Moses said to the spies, "Get you up this way southward,"[1] while the direction was due north from Kadesh, where the camp was at that time. The word is there also the geographical term Negeb, and to render it south in such cases misleads the reader. There were several distinct Negebs, which together comprehended the whole territory south and south-west of the mountains of Judæa, and faded away by insensible degrees into the vast Wilderness of Wandering. The best account of this general region is given by Wilton, in his remarkable book, "The Negeb," which I advise you by all means to study. All travellers from Sinai to Hebron pass through that country, and Palmer and Drake have recently explored most of it, with admirable courage and success. We may expect still further discoveries from the surveys of the Palestine Exploration Fund expeditions, especially with respect to that portion of the Negeb bordering upon and immediately below the mountains of Judæa. Traversing that region many years ago, the idea was continually suggested, by the antique sound of the names ringing in one's ear as he passes through the Negeb, that a careful scientific survey would reveal

[1] Numb. xiii. 17.

nearly every Biblical site, bearing names very little changed from those found in the fifteenth chapter of Joshua. The reason for this tenacity of site and name is obvious. From its geographical position the Negeb lies beyond the lines of foreign travel and intercourse, and is so barren and destitute of water that none but tent-dwelling Bedawîn Arabs would ever covet it, take the trouble to conquer it, or consent to live in it. Hence the same nomadic races have always resided in and roamed over it, and the names they gave, once attached to places, would never be changed.

What sort of vegetable is this whose stems our muleteers are cutting up and chewing with so much relish?

It is the wild artichoke, called in Arabic 'akkûb. We can amuse ourselves with it and its behavior for awhile, and may possibly extract something more valuable than the insipid juice of which our men are so fond. You observe that in growing it throws out numerous branches of equal size and length in all directions, forming a sort of sphere, or globe, a foot or more in diameter. When ripe and dry in autumn, these branches become rigid and light as a feather, the parent stem breaks off at the ground, and the wind carries these vegetable globes whithersoever it pleaseth. At the proper season thousands of them come scudding over the plain, rolling, leaping, bounding, to the dismay both of the horse and his rider. Once, on the plain north of Hamath, my horse became quite unmanageable amongst them. They charged down upon us on the wings of the wind, which broke them from their moorings, and sent them careering over the desert in countless numbers. Our excellent native itinerant, Abu Fâu'ar, had a similar encounter with them on the eastern desert, beyond the Hauran; and his horse was so terrified that he was obliged to alight and lead him. I have long suspected that this wild artichoke is the galgal, which, in Psalm lxxxiii. 13, is rendered wheel, and in Isaiah xvii. 13, a rolling thing. Evidently, our translators knew not what to call it. The first passage reads thus: "O my God, make them like a wheel [galgal]; as the stubble before the wind;" and the second, "Rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing [galgal] before the whirlwind." Now, from the nature of the parallelism, the galgal

cannot be a wheel, but something corresponding to chaff. It must also be something that does not fly like the chaff, but, in a striking manner, rolls before the wind. The signification of galgal in Hebrew, and its equivalent in other Shemitic dialects, requires this; and this rolling artichoke meets the case most emphatically, and especially when it rolls before the whirlwind. In the encounter referred to north of Hamath, my eyes were half blinded with the stubble and chaff which filled the air; but it was the extraordinary behavior of this "rolling thing" that riveted my attention. Hundreds of these globes, all bounding like gazelles in one direction over the desert, would suddenly wheel short round at the bidding of a counter-blast, and dash away with equal speed on their new course. An Arab proverb addresses this rolling thing thus: "Ho! 'akkûb, where do you put up to-night?" to which it answers as it flies, "Where the wind puts up." They also derive one of their many forms of cursing from this plant: "May you be whirled, like the 'akkûb, before the wind, until you are caught in the thorns, or plunged into the sea." If this is not the "wheel" of David, and the "rolling thing" of Isaiah, from which they also borrowed their imprecations upon the wicked, I have seen nothing in the country to suggest the comparison.

VIII.

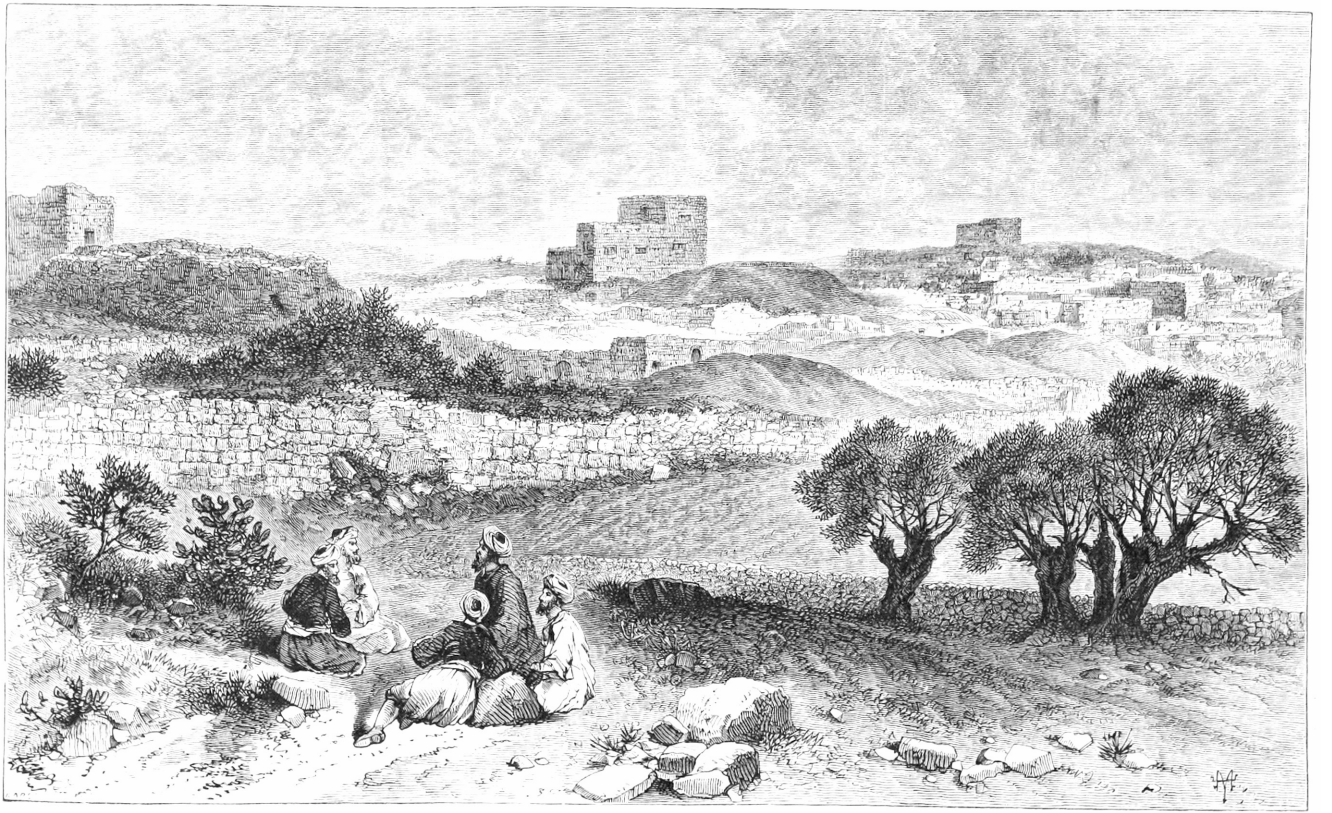
BEIT JIBRÎN.

Beit Jibrîn, Eleutheropolis.—Sacred Sites in the Neighborhood.—Betogabra, Eleutheropolis, Beit Jibrîn, and Gath identical.—Khŭrbet Jett.—Historical Notices of Gath.—Mareshah and Moresheth-gath.—Tell es Sâfieh.—Blanchegarde.—Beit Jibrîn, House of Giants.—Victory of King Asa over Zerah the Ethiopian.—Fortifications at Beit Jibrîn.—Caverns and Excavations.—Inscriptions and Niches.—Purpose or Object of the Excavations.—Rock-cut Tombs.—Cisterns.—Dhikrîn.—Cretaceous Formation.—Deir Dubbân.—Church of Santa Hanneh.—Zorah, Birthplace of Samson.—The Angel, Manoah, and his Wife.—Timnath.—Vineyards of Timnath.—Bees and Honey in the Lion's Carcass.—Honey in the Wood and upon the Ground.—Incident in the Life of Jonathan.—Culture of Bees in Syria and Egypt.—Estimation of Honey in Ancient Times.—Samson's Wedding at Timnath.—Similarity in the Celebration of Ancient and Modern Weddings.—Samson's Wife.—Oriental Wives.—Wady es Sŭnt, Valley of Elah.—Goliath.—David.—Death of Goliath.—Rout of the Philistines.—Shaaraim.—Pursuit of the Philistines by the Israelites.—Sŭnt, Acacia; Elah, Terebinth.—Neither Saul nor Abner recognize David.—The Biblical Account in 1 Samuel, chaps. xvi. xvii.—David at Gath.—King Achish.—Deception of David, and the Palliating Circumstances.—Ziklag, 'Asloog.—Wady 'Asluj.—Aphek, in the Plain of Esdraelon.—Return of David from Aphek to Ziklag.—Pursuit of the Amalekites.—A Sick Egyptian.—Death of King Saul.—David sends Presents to his former Friends.—Character of David's Followers.—Despotism of King Saul.—Debtors in Oriental Countries.—Inhabitants of Beit Jibrîn carrying Arms.—Use of the Sling.—David's Eminent Accomplishments.—The Lion and the Bear.

April 18th.

HOW is it ascertained that Beit Jibrîn is the site of the ancient Eleutheropolis?

The identification is due to the skill of Dr. Robinson and his companion, Dr. Smith; and the process of discovery and verification is detailed with great care in his "Researches." Owing to the fact that Eusebius and Jerome take this as the central station from which to mark the direction and distance of many other places, there are few geographical points in the country of greater value; and Dr. Robinson very justly magnifies its importance. I have



BEIT JIBRÎN—ELEUTHEROPOLIS.

myself derived the highest gratification in following out his results in my own excursions through this region.

There is a whole cluster of sacred sites scattered around this important centre. On the east we have Beit Nŭsîb—Nezib; and farther over the hills to the north-east Jeb'ah—the Gibeah of Judah; and north, a little east, we find Shoco, in esh Shuweikeh, and beyond it Jarmuth in Yarmûk. 'Ain esh Shemsh is Beth-shemesh, and north-west of this is Tibneh, the Timnath of Samson's wife. North-east of this is Sŭr'ah—Zorah—the city of his father, and south-east of that is Zânû'a, the ancient Zanuah. The valley in which Shoco lies is called Wady es Sŭnt, and this is probably the battle-field of David and Goliath of Gath. Dr. Robinson thinks that Gath may have been at or near Deir Dubbân, where are very remarkable excavations and other indications of an ancient city.

It appears to me that Betogabra, Eleutheropolis, Beit Jibrîn, and Gath are all one and the same city. My attention was first directed to this subject by an incidental remark of the man hired to guide me to Tell es Sâfieh. He was a native of Beit Jibrîn, well acquainted with this region, and in giving me a list of places and ruins he mentioned Khŭrbet Jett. On being questioned in regard to it, he replied, "Certainly there is a place west of Beit Jibrîn called Khŭrbet Jett." I was so much impressed by this statement that I wanted to turn back and examine the spot; but my luggage was too far ahead to allow me to do so. Many years afterwards, upon another visit to Beit Jibrîn, I inquired of the sheikh concerning Khŭrbet Jett, and he at once offered to conduct me to it. I was somewhat disappointed in the site shown me. It is on one of the low rocky ridges which extend down westwards a mile or more into the plain, and has very few indications of ancient remains upon it. But between it and Beit Jibrîn traces of former buildings are scattered about almost continuously. The information given by the sheikh was the less to be relied upon, since he unfortunately knew the name of the site I was anxious to find, and, as all travellers amongst this people know, such guides will not hesitate to invent names, and sites even, which they think may gratify the inquirer. Still, there was no appearance of hesitation in the sheikh, or of any intention to mislead.

A singular obscurity hangs over the site of Gath. Nothing in the Bible is decisive, and the historic notices are vague and uncertain. Jerome seems to locate it on the road from Eleutheropolis to Gaza, but does not state how far west from Beit Jibrîn. Khŭrbet Jett may, therefore, answer to the place referred to by Jerome. Benjamin of Tudela makes Mareshah and Gath identical. Mareshah is on the list of "cities with their villages," given to the tribe of Judah, "toward the coast of Edom southward."[1] It was rebuilt by Rehoboam, and is mentioned in connection with Gath.[2] Micah refers to it as though it was a suburb of Gath.[3] The site of Mareshah is now admitted to be at a tell a little more than a mile south of Beit Jibrîn. The bearing of this upon the location of Gath is important, since the prophet Micah, by coupling the two names together, wrote Moresheth-gath probably in order to fix the place of the less-known suburb by the name of the main city. This is quite natural, on the supposition that Gath was at Beit Jibrîn; but not if Tell es Sâfieh is the site of Gath, for that is many miles away to the north, and one would have to pass through Beit Jibrîn and several other towns to get to Tell es Sâfieh from Mareshah. It would certainly now be unnatural to write Moresheth—Tell es Sâfieh, in order to mark the site of Gath at the latter place.

Dr. Porter has located Gath at Tell es Sâfieh; and this is now, I believe, the general opinion, and, of course, may be correct. I am not yet satisfied with the identification. There is not a single mention of Tell es Sâfieh in any ancient record, so far as known, which identifies it with any Biblical site. Neither Eusebius nor Jerome locate Gath there. It is quite suitable for a fortification, and as such it figures in the Middle Ages under the name of Blanchegarde, a fort having been erected on it by the Crusaders under King Fulco, about A.D. 1138, and several years after the rebuilding of the ancient fortress at Beit Jibrîn, to check the forays of the Muhammedan garrison from that city and from Askelon, not much less than eighteen miles distant. This fort was built of hewn stone, and had four towers. It afterwards came into the possession of Saladin, and was dismantled by him in A.D. 1191, but appears to have been rebuilt by King Richard of England, and on the plains

[1] Josh. xv. 21, 44. [2] 2 Chron. ix. 5, 8. [3] Mic. i. 10, 14.

about it were enacted many of his romantic exploits. Once he narrowly escaped capture at the hands of a chosen band of horsemen despatched from Askelon to Blanchegarde by Saladin. On another occasion he had an affray with a party of Saracens, of whom he slew three, and took five prisoners.



TELL ES SÂFIEH—BLANCHEGARDE.

I saw few indications to mark Tell es Sâfieh as the site of an ancient place, and the main ruins proved to be the indistinct foundations of a castle on the highest part of the tell, and constructed of large hewn stones: numbers of these may be seen built in the walls of the terraces along the hill-side. There are also cisterns hewn in the rock, but no fountain of living water; and I do not think the site is adapted for the seat of a large city. It cannot

compare with Beit Jibrîn, which, indeed, has in and around it the most wonderful remains of antiquity to be found in any other place in Philistia. If Beit Jibrîn is not the site of Gath, it will be difficult to select any city of Biblical celebrity that will accord with the indications and central position of this remarkable place.

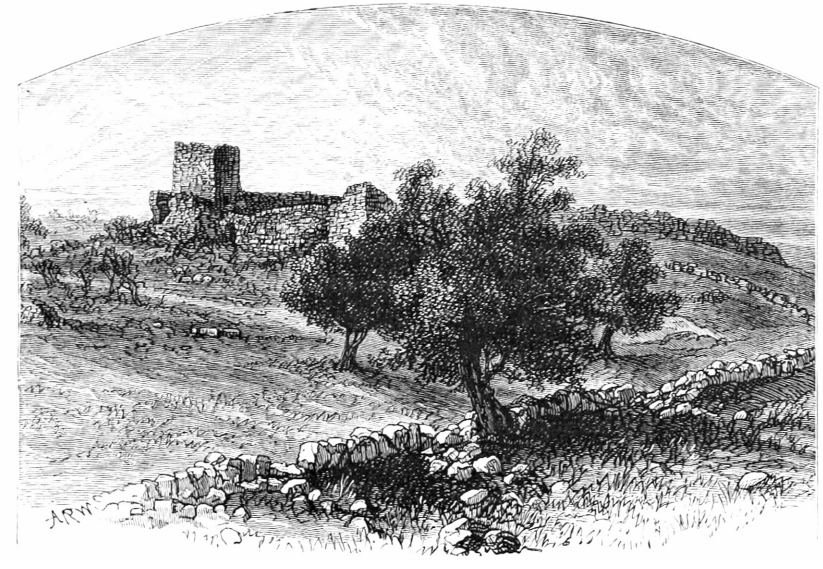
Without attaching too much importance to the mere sound and signification of names, I must say that to hear the compound word Beit-Jibrîn pronounced by the Arabs naturally suggests the idea of the house of giants, for beit is the common Arabic word for house, and jababirah for giants; and the Hebrew Betogabra is even more suggestive of Goliath and his gigantic family. It is possible that the name should be written Jibrîel, instead of Jibrîn; and Beit Jibrîel might be translated the house of Gabriel, as has been suggested by Dr. Robinson and others. There are well-known examples of the change of the *b* into *n*, as Beitîn for Bethel, Zer'in for Jezreel, etc. But, in spite of all such criticism, the name Beit Jibrîn, as written and pronounced by her present people, never suggests to my mind the angel Gabriel; and I am, therefore, still inclined to the opinion that Eleutheropolis, Betogabra, Beit Jibrîn, and Gath are one and the same city.

These identifications lend additional interest to this vicinity; for not only did Goliath reside here, but in this beautiful valley King Asa achieved that grand victory over "Zerah the Ethiopian with a host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah."[1]

There are, in fact, many things about Beit Jibrîn which merit a careful examination. The most striking is the quadrangular enclosure which marks out the boundaries of an old castle. It is about six hundred feet square, and was built of large heavy stone. Then, too, the castle within this enclosure has points of interest. Some parts of it appear to be ancient, while the confused mass of arches, vaults, and broken walls speaks of Saracenic and Crusading times. Dr. Robinson thus describes the ruins of this castle:

"They consist of the remains of a fortress of immense strength, in the midst of an irregular, rounded enclosure, encompassed by a

[1] 2 Chron. xiv. 9, 10.



FORTIFICATIONS AT BEIT JIBRÎN.

very ancient and strong wall. This outer wall was built of large squared stones, uncemented. It has been mostly thrown down; but on the northern side it is still several feet in height, running along the southern bank of the water-bed of the wady which comes down from the east-north-east. In the other quarter, also, it is still distinctly to be traced. Along this wall, on the inside, towards the west and north-west, is a row of ancient massive vaults, with five round arches, apparently of the same age as the wall itself. These are now nearly covered by the accumulated rubbish, yet some of them still serve as dwellings for the inhabitants. The character of this wall and of these vaults leaves no doubt that they are of Roman origin.

"In the midst of this area stands an irregular castle, the lower parts of which seem to be as ancient as the exterior wall; but it has obviously been built up again in more modern times. Indeed, an inscription over the gate-way shows that it was last repaired by the Turks in A.H. 958—A.D. 1551—nearly ten years after the present walls of Jerusalem were built. The interior of the castle was full of arches and vaults; and the people told us of a church with pic-

tures in the southern part, now shut up, and, indeed, buried beneath the ruins."[1]

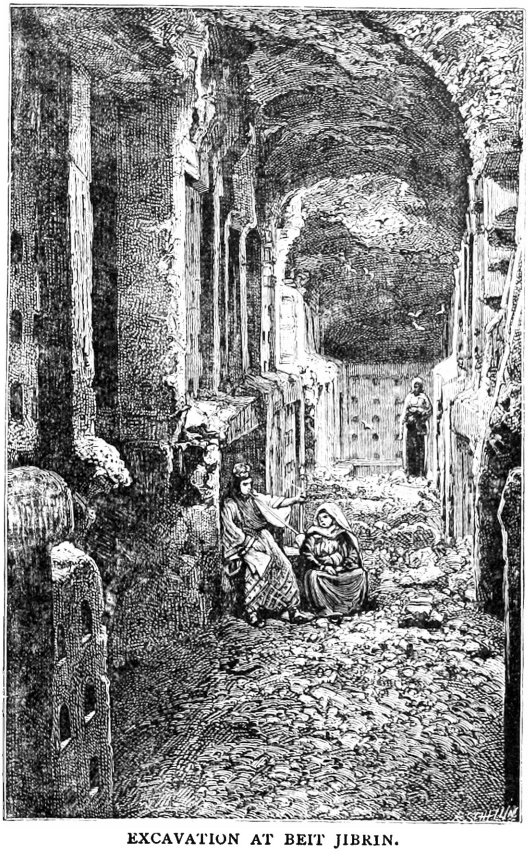
Besides the castle there are immense artificial caverns hewn out of these cretaceous hills, and some of them curiously ornamented. They are found chiefly in the wady which runs up south by east, and in which is situated, farther on, the ruined church called Santa Hanneh—St. Anne. Dr. Robinson has given a detailed account of these remarkable excavations, the object of which he is at a loss to comprehend. Some of them may have been originally cisterns, but subsequently enlarged into temples and underground chapels, and others made into granaries.

Accompanied by Salîm, I spent the morning exploring those caverns; and though I had heard and read about them, they took me quite by surprise, as something new, strange, and inexplicable. In some cases several of them are connected together by short tunnels. The sides of most of them are cut smooth, but in others they are irregular and rough. In shape, formation, and size they differ greatly: some are long, high, and narrow; others are hollow cones; and many of them are bell-shaped, and lighted from above by a circular opening at the top; but what impressed me most was their enormous capacity. I measured one which was nearly one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, and, by letting down my measuring tape from the top of another, found that it was more than ninety feet deep. There are scores of these excavations here, there, and everywhere; now on one side of the valley, then on the other, south, south-east, and south-west, I believe; but my head got bewildered in exploring such underground labyrinths, and I lost all idea of the points of the compass. In one of the largest caverns I noticed carved figures of men or gods, but very rude and grotesque. In some there are inscriptions, but so high I could not make them out.

The inscriptions are generally in Cufic characters, but of no historic value, consisting mainly of pious ejaculations, scratched upon the walls by Christian and Muhammedan visitors. The uncouth figures you mentioned are indeed curious, but so high up that it is not easy to copy them, or to ascertain what they were intended to represent. Some of these chambers have numerous small niches

[1] Rob. Res. vol. ii. p. 25.

or pigeon-holes, in various positions, like the inside walls of a columbary. Possibly they were made for human skulls, or to hold funeral urns, which, however, presupposes that such chambers were used for sepulture. One, near the church of Santa Hanneh, is said to have seventeen hundred and seventy-four of these niches. That cavern is ninety-six feet long and seven wide; the niches placed in two tiers, separated by pilasters into twelve bays; each tier consists of five rows, of four in a row, giving ten rows in a total height of about twelve feet. The niches are about ten inches either way.



EXCAVATION AT BEIT JIBRIN.

When and by whom were these extraordinary excavations made, and for what purpose or purposes?

These are questions asked by every visitor, but to which no one can give a satisfactory reply. They were not cisterns, for they could not have been filled, and would not have held water. They were not granaries, for all the harvests of Philistia might be stored away in any one of the larger caverns. They were not made for defence, since the occupants could at any time have been driven out or destroyed by throwing down fire from above. They were not sanctuaries, for there is no indication that they were employed for religious purposes. If designed for dwellings for Troglodyte Idumeans of ancient times, as has been suggested by Dr. Robinson,

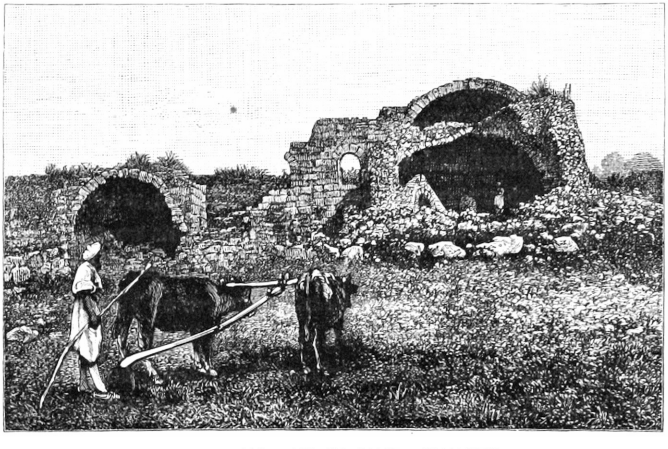
they are wholly unique, and must have been extremely inconvenient. They are, therefore, an unsolved puzzle, and I fear must remain so; for there are neither inscriptions, architectural devices, nor even traditions to explain either their origin or their object.

Rock-cut tombs abound in various places around Beit Jibrîn, as was to be expected; but they are constructed in a manner quite different from the caves. Some of them are so large, and the arrangement of the locali so extensive and intricate, as fairly to merit the name of catacombs. Other excavations were, no doubt, intended for cisterns. These were stuccoed and made water-tight, and most of the villages in this eastern part of Philistia depend upon them for water. Between this and Tell es Sâfieh is a place called Dhikrîn, which boasts of an underground cistern which has forty mouths or openings. On my way to the tell I examined this immense cistern; and, though I did not find half the number of mouths named, the size of the cistern was obviously very great. A top crust, or rocky shell, two or three feet thick, extends, unbroken, over a large area. Below it the soft cretaceous marl has been excavated, leaving only pillars here and there to support the overlying roof. The mouths were opened at various places through the hard crust; and it would be quite possible to make forty of them, or even a much greater number. This underlying cretaceous formation is of immense thickness, and it is in this that the prodigious cistern of Dhikrîn and the sepulchral caverns of Beit Jibrîn have been excavated. The excavations found at Deir Dubbân are not so large as these of Beit Jibrîn, and are in a more dilapidated condition; but in all other respects they are identical, and a description of them would be a useless repetition. That village is some five miles to the north, and has nothing more remarkable about it than the name, which means Convent of Flies—suggestive of Ekron's fly-god, Egypt's fourth plague, and the perpetual annoyance of the traveller in this country.

You have still to visit the ruined church of Santa Hanneh, which you can easily do this afternoon, as it is only about a mile distant, and in the valley which runs up towards the south-east. In the evening we will converse about it, and other subjects which are more or less connected with our present position.

April 18th. Evening.

If ever completed according to the plan indicated by the existing remains, the church of Santa Hanneh must have been a fine structure. One is not prepared to find such an edifice in that lone and out-of-the-way place. The central nave is more than thirty feet wide, and the entire length of the church must have been at least one hundred and twenty feet. There were also large additions to the main building, the details of which I could not comprehend.



RUINED CHURCH OF SANTA HANNEH.

Lieutenant Conder made a careful survey of the edifice, and he mentions two walls, which appear to be a continuation of the apse-diameter, pierced with two tiers of two windows with circular arches, and extending sixty-one feet on either side, giving a total width of one hundred and fifty-four feet to the building. In the north-west and south-west corners there are large chapels, each about seventy feet long by twenty broad. He pronounces it the finest specimen of a Byzantine church which he had then seen in Palestine. The existence of such a ruined church here corroborates the ecclesiastical Notitiæ of early ages, which represent Eleutheropolis as an important episcopal city. The substructions of Santa Hanneh, or St. Anne, date from the Byzantine period. The stones were carefully hewn, and the walls massive; but the ground-plan has been altered by the Crusaders.

We are now not far from Zorah, the birthplace of Samson, and it is pleasant to find his home still in existence, in that secluded mountain village above 'Ain Shemsh.[1] On one of the hard rocks of that village Manoah placed his sacrifice, "and the angel of the Lord did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on: for it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame."[2]

In travelling through this sacred territory, few things please me more than to light upon circumstances which prove the accuracy of ancient Bible narratives, even in the most incidental remarks and the minutest allusions.

Josephus has a curious addition to the Bible narrative of these transactions, in which, after extolling the charms of Manoah's wife, he says that her husband was exceedingly jealous; and when he heard her expatiate upon the beauty of the man who had appeared to her and announced the birth of a son, he was so consumed with this terrible passion that he besought God to send the messenger again, that he might see him—and much more to the same purport.

In the history of Samson it is said that he went down to Timnath, and there saw the woman whom he desired to marry.

Timnath still exists on the plain, and to reach it from Zorah you must descend through wild rocky gorges, just where one would expect to find a lion in those days, when wild beasts were far more common than at present. Nor is it more remarkable that lions should be met with in such places than that fierce leopards should now maintain their position in the thickly settled parts of Lebanon, and even in these very mountains, within a few hundred rods of large villages. Yet such I know is the fact.

There were then vineyards belonging to Timnath, as there now are in these hamlets along the base of the hills and upon the mountain-sides. These vineyards are very often far out from the villages, climbing up rough wadies and wild cliffs, in one of which Samson encountered the young lion. He threw the dead body aside, and the next time he went down to Timnath he found a swarm of bees in the carcass. This, it must be confessed, is an extraordinary occurrence; but it is a curious fact that other swarms of bees have

[1] Judg. xiii. 2. [2] Judg. xiii. 19, 20.

manifested a like caprice in the selection of their hives. Thus, according to Herodotus, a swarm occupied the skull of one Silius; and bees are said to have stuffed with honey-comb a human skeleton in a tomb within a church in Verona. It should be remembered, also, that in this hot country the flesh of the lion would be quickly devoured by wild beasts, birds, ants, hornets, and worms, and the entire carcass would become so dry as not to emit an offensive smell. Bees, we know, abound in this region. There was honey on the ground, and honey dropped from the trees of the wood, on that memorable day when Jonathan nearly lost his life for merely putting the end of his rod in a honey-comb and eating thereof, contrary to the absurd "curse" of his unnatural father.[1]

In regard to that incident in the story of Jonathan, we must remember that there was a very great earthquake on that wonderful day; and those who have seen, as I have, the earth burst open, and the very rocks rent asunder by an earthquake, will not think it incredible that there should have been honey on the ground in the wood of Beth-aven.[2]

It has often occurred to me that a custom still prevalent in this country with those who raise bees might throw light on this incident. The owners frequently remove the hives up into the loftiest mountains as the flowers disappear from the lower regions, and put them in the woods, that the bees may gather honey from mountain thyme, and other plants that bloom in autumn on those cool heights. These hives are made of plaited basket-work, formed into long hollow cylinders, and are easily transported on the backs of mules and donkeys. The cylinders are piled up in the woods, in a sort of pyramid, and covered with an old mat. Now, such stacks of hives would be readily overthrown and broken open by the tremendous trembling of the earth on that day of battle, and even hollow trees in which bees might have built their comb would burst open under such rude shaking; and so it came to pass that "when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped."[3] In Egypt I found that bees were taken up and down the Nile in boats, for the same purpose that they are carried up the mountains in this country; and it is one of their remarkable

[1] 1 Sam. xiv. 30. [2] 1 Sam. xiv. 15. [3] 1 Sam. xiv. 26.

instincts, that though their locality is changed every night, they never lose their reckoning, nor fail to find their way back to the boat and to their own hive.

It appears to me that honey must have been held in far higher estimation in ancient times than it is at present.

This may well have been the case before the invention of sugar and other sweet substances, which are not only much cheaper but more healthy. So, also, the cultivation of bees was then carried on to an extent not common amongst civilized nations. We have no modern poet who either could or would teach his muse to sing of bees as does Virgil in his Fourth Georgic. The subject, however, is always interesting in itself, and apart from the many allusions to it in the Bible.

But to return from this apiary digression to Samson's wedding at Timnath.

The circumstances of the feast are in keeping with such occasions at the present day. Even the weddings of ordinary people are celebrated with great rejoicings, which are kept up several days. Samson, however, was not an ordinary peasant, but the son of Manoah, who, Josephus says, "was, without dispute, the principal person of his country;" and the marriages of such are attended with quite as much display now as in the days of Samson. The games and sports, also, by which the companions of the bridegroom pass away the time, are not unlike those mentioned in the fourteenth chapter of Judges; and such occasions frequently end in quarrels, and even bloodshed. I have known many fatal feuds grow out of the sports of these boisterous festivals.

And yet one thing more: Samson's wife was a weak and wicked woman, who had no real love for her husband; and this is certainly common enough at the present day. Wives are procured now, as then, by the intervention of parents, and without any of that personal attachment between the parties which we deem essential. They are also very often ready to enter into any treacherous conspiracy against their husbands by which they can gain some desired advantage either for themselves or their friends. Indeed, there are many husbands in this country who neither will nor dare trust their wives. On the contrary, they watch them with the utmost distrust,

and keep everything locked up for fear of their treachery. And yet these distrusted but cunning wives have wonderful power over their husbands. Though uneducated in all that is good, they are perfect masters of craft and deceit. By their arts and their importunity they carry their point often to the utter and obvious ruin of their husbands, and this, too, when there is really no love between them. It is not at all contrary to present experience, therefore, that Samson's wife should conspire against him in the matter of the riddle, nor that she should succeed in teasing him out of the secret.

Was it not in this neighborhood that David began his illustrious career by slaying Goliath of Gath?

In the seventeenth chapter of 1 Samuel we read that the Philistines went up against Judah, and pitched near Shoco, which site is ascertained to be at Shuweikeh, about eight miles to the north-east of us. Beit Nettîf is on a hill some three miles nearly north of it; and between them is the deep Wady es Sŭnt, which Dr. Robinson identifies with the Elah of 1 Samuel xvii. 2, where Saul encamped, probably on the north side, opposite the Philistines. It was into this valley that the champion of the "uncircumcised" descended every day to defy the armies of the living God: his height nearly ten feet, his proportions enormous, his visage terrible; covered with a shining coat of mail weighing five thousand shekels, a helmet of brass on his head, a target of brass between his shoulders, and greaves of brass on his legs, he appeared like a brazen statue of colossal size, holding a spear whose staff was like a weaver's beam. No wonder the stoutest heart quailed, "and all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid."[1] Forty days did this terrible giant come into the valley, morning and evening, to defy the hosts of Israel, exclaiming, with impious insolence, "Give me a man, that we may fight together." Thus he stood and cried in the morning when the youthful David drew nigh with the ephah of parched corn, and the ten loaves which his father had sent to his elder brothers. He hears the tumult and the defiance, and his heroic soul takes fire. Eagerly he inquires into the case, and, undeterred by the rebukes of his envious brothers, he offers to meet the dreadful champion. He is brought before Saul,

[1] 1 Sam. xvii. 4–7, 24.

who said unto him, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth." David modestly replies that, though young, he had already performed, by God's aid, deeds as daring and desperate as this. He had killed both a lion and a bear with his empty hands: and "the Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."[1] Declining armor and helmet, coat of mail and sword, he took merely his shepherd's staff, and the sling with which he had often practised while tending his father's sheep on the mountains. He came down into the wady, put five smooth stones into his scrip, and went on boldly to meet the giant. One of the stones, hurled with his whole force and with unerring aim, sank deep into the giant's insolent forehead. He staggers convulsively, and with a mighty clang falls prostrate on his face. David is upon him in a moment, and with his own great sword strikes off his head, which he bears back to Saul in triumph. Thus were verified David's confidence and piety. He fought "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel."[2]

That was a glorious day for David, and for all Israel as well; and the victory has forever immortalized the valley of Elah. It is very gratifying to be able not only to identify the battle-field, but even to trace the direction along which the discomfited host of the Philistines fled after their defeat. Many of them fell down wounded, and perished by the way to Shaaraim. Is anything known about that place?

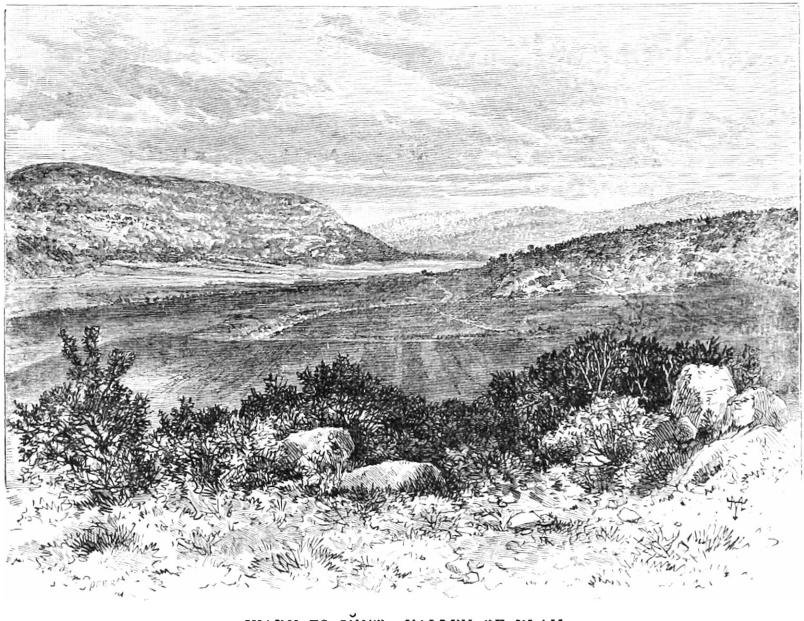
The site has not yet been identified, but it was probably somewhere on the plain westwards from Shoco, in connection with which it is mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of Joshua. Some of the fugitives passed over the hills to the north-west, and were pursued by the men of Israel, "until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron."[3] This valley was, no doubt, Wady Sŭrâr, and the pursuit must have been continued in that direction for many miles over a rough and difficult country. Another column fled "by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath." If Tell es Sâfieh be the site of this last place, the direction would be west from the débouchure of Wady Sŭnt upon the plain; but if Gath be identified with Beit

[1] 1 Sam. xvii. 37. [2] 1 Sam. xvii. 46. [3] 1 Sam. xvii. 52.

Jibrîn, or, as Dr. Robinson suggests as possible, with Deir Dubbân, the flight would have been south-west, along the foot-hills of the Judæan mountains—an open and very practical route.

The modern name of the valley of Elah, you say, is Wady es Sŭnt; on the maps I see it is spelled Sŭmt.

Yes, but the true name is Sŭnt, not Sŭmt. The valley, no doubt, got its name from the acacia-trees which abound in some



WADY ES SŬNT—VALLEY OF ELAH.

parts of it, just as the name Elah was given to it in ancient times from the terebinth-trees; and it is a curious fact that there is still a terebinth-tree, in the valley below Beit Nettîf, so large and ancient as to attract the notice and admiration of all travellers. Dr. Robinson says it is immense—the largest of its kind he saw in Palestine.

How do you account for the fact that neither Saul nor Abner, either before or after the battle, recognized David? In the verses immediately preceding the account of Goliath we are informed that David had been summoned from Bethlehem to play on his harp before Saul, when the evil spirit from the Lord came upon him, and

Jesse had sent him upon an ass, laden with bread and a bottle of wine and a kid. It is added that Saul loved David greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. He also requested his father to leave David with him, for he had found favor in his sight; but the very next notice is that David is quietly tending sheep at Bethlehem, and his three oldest brothers are with the army. David reappears before the king, and is not recognized either by him or by his servants.[1] To me this has always appeared very strange.

It is, indeed, so strange as to suggest the query whether the incidents in this part of David's life are arranged in the exact order of time in which they occurred. The account in the seventeenth chapter has throughout the air of first acquaintance. Abner said, in reply to the inquiry of the king, "As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell who he is." David himself gives not the slightest hint, either before or after the fight, that he had ever seen the king. This is a reserve, a stretch of modesty utterly unparalleled, upon the supposition that he had not only been with him before, but had been greatly beloved by him, and selected to be his armor-bearer—implying the closest intimacy and largest confidence. It is no part of Oriental character to refrain, through modesty, from claiming previous acquaintanceship with superiors; and the present instance is so far beyond the bounds of probability, that I hesitate to believe it while there is any other possible explanation. How could the king, and Abner, and all the other attendants of the royal household, have so utterly forgotten the wonderful harper who had charmed away the evil spirit, and had been so beloved? And although we are expressly told that "David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's flock at Bethlehem," still, it seems to me much more probable that this incident of playing on the harp before the king belongs to some period subsequent to the battle with Goliath.[2] This is rendered more credible from the fact that there are some circumstances introduced into the account of that day's adventures which could not have taken place until long after; as, for example, in the fifty-fourth verse, where it is said that "David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent." Now David had no tent at the

[1] 1 Sam. xvi. 17–23; xvii. 15, 31–37.

[2] 1 Sam. xvii. 15.

time, and did not go to Jerusalem until after the lapse of many eventful years.

If, however, we were shut up to the necessity of accepting the narrative as to time just in the order in which it is recorded, I have only to remark that we do not know how long a period intervened between the return of David to his father's house and his appearance before the king on the morning of the duel with Goliath. If it were two or three years, it is possible that David had, in the mean while, suddenly shot up from boyhood to youth, tall and robust, and his personal appearance might have so changed as to bear little resemblance to the ruddy lad who played skilfully on the harp. It is a fact that lads of this country, particularly of the higher classes, are often very fair, full-faced, and handsome until about fourteen years of age, but during the next two or three years a surprising change takes place. They not only spring into full-grown manhood as if by magic, but all their former beauty disappears; their complexion becomes dark, their features harsh and angular, and the whole expression of countenance stern and even disagreeable. I have often been accosted by such persons, formerly friendly acquaintances, but who had suddenly grown entirely out of my knowledge, nor could I, without difficulty, recognize them. David had become a shepherd after leaving the king's palace—an occupation which, of all others, would most rapidly change his fair complexion into a dusky bronze. He appeared before Saul in his shepherd's attire, not in the gay dress of a courtier in the king's palace, and he may, therefore, not have been recognized. But, as already observed, if this were so, it is not only remarkable in itself, but it follows that David was at an early age possessed of a wisdom, modesty, and self-control without a parallel in the history of mankind.

In after-life David had much to do with this part of the country. Twice he fled to Gath for fear of Saul. Is it not strange that he should select the city of Goliath for his asylum?

He was hard pressed, and had only a choice of dangers. Gath was near his native mountains, and probably had friendly relations with the Israelites more than the distant cities of the Philistines. King Achish, also, appears to have been an open-hearted, unsus-

pecting, and generous character, probably of that chivalrous temperament which led him to admire such a hero as David. At any rate, he treated him very kindly, and presented him with Ziklag, a village which seems to have been long retained and highly prized by the royal family.[1]

How do you dispose of the deception practised by David towards his protector in the matter of the excursions against the Amalekites and others down south of us?[2]

That David acted under the pressure of very powerful motives, and was by them urged aside from the plain, open path of rectitude. We are under no obligation to justify all his conduct. It is but common justice, however, to give him the benefit of all palliating circumstances, and when these are duly weighed we shall not find occasion to pass too severe a judgment upon him. He was an exile, hunted out of his home like a partridge on the mountains, and obliged to reside amongst enemies; was surrounded on all sides by difficulties and dangers, and with a large troop of friends and followers, for whom he must find the means of support; he had also been set apart by God himself to be the deliverer of his people from these very Amalekites, who had been condemned to total destruction for their enormous wickedness by the Sovereign Ruler of all nations. David, therefore, felt that he had a divine warrant for attacking and exterminating them, and they were actually within the borders of his own tribe of Judah, as settled by Joshua. The wrong, therefore, if wrong there were, was in the deception practised upon Achish, and not in the invading and destroying of the Amalekites. This God had sternly enjoined upon the Israelites to do. Let it be remembered, also, that Achish had no real right to know where David went, nor was David under any obligation to tell him the whole truth. What he did say was true in the letter of it, for David had actually made an inroad into those places which he mentioned, though not against the Jews.

Ziklag, you suppose, was somewhere in this neighborhood?

We should naturally infer that it was south of Gath, for David resided in it during the time he was connected with Achish, as we read in 1 Samuel, in the twenty-seventh and thirtieth chapters. Mr.

[1] 1 Sam. xxvii. 1–8. [2] 1 Sam. xxvii. 8–12.

Rowlands heard of an 'Asloog eastwards of Khulasah, which he suggested might be Ziklag. Mr. Wilton, in his "Negeb," adopts this identification; and most recent travellers appear to acquiesce in the conclusion. Messrs. Palmer and Drake lay down in their map of the Negeb a Wady 'Asluj eastwards of Khŭlasah, which is the same name differently spelled. The great distance from Gath presents the only serious objection. Wady 'Asluj is a day's journey south of Beer-sheba, and yet David appears to have been in daily intercourse with the king of Gath. It seems strange, also, that Achish should then be master of the territory so far to the south-east as to be able to bestow Ziklag upon David, if it was situated in Wady 'Asluj. Again, David accompanied Achish on the expedition against Saul, as recorded in the twenty-ninth chapter of 1 Samuel, as far north as Aphek. How far north that was we unfortunately do not know, but it seems to have been in the plain of Esdraelon. Whatever the distance be, it was that much farther away from Wady 'Asluj; and yet, upon being dismissed at the demand of the lords of the Philistines, David and his men are back at Ziklag on the third day, and necessarily on the morning of that day; for, finding Ziklag burned, and the women carried off by the Amalekites, he pursued after them until two hundred of his men were utterly exhausted, and had to be left at the brook Besor. The other four hundred continued the pursuit, and came up with and utterly routed the Amalekites. The attack was made on the evening of this same third day. How all this was possible, if Wady 'Asluj be Ziklag, I confess is beyond my comprehension; and though I can name no rival site for Ziklag nearer to Gath, yet I cannot adopt Wady 'Asluj with much confidence. The slight resemblance in the two names carries but little weight with it, though, in the Arabic Bible, Ziklag is spelled Siklag with three of the heaviest gutturals in the language, which may be thought to increase the resemblance between the names Ziklag and 'Asluj. The question, therefore, as to the site of Ziklag is not yet decided, and must wait for further investigation.

Connected with Ziklag, wherever it was, occurred some of the most remarkable incidents in the life of David, one of which we have already mentioned, but may refer to it again. While he was with Achish and the Philistine army, the bordering Amalekites

invaded the south, and Ziklag, which they burned with fire, and carried all the inhabitants away captive. This terrible calamity threw David and his whole company into the most violent transports of grief. They "lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep;" and the people, in their madness and despair, even talked of stoning David.[1] He, however, succeeded in inspiring them with courage to pursue their enemies. They overtook them in the night; and, falling suddenly upon them while they were eating and drinking and dancing, because of the great spoil they had taken, the victory was complete; and all that had been taken from Ziklag was recovered, together with a vast amount of booty, which these Amalekites had gathered up from the land of the Philistines. There is a remarkable resemblance between this victory of David and that of Abraham over the kings who had carried Lot away captive. By this victory the exterminating malediction pronounced against this people by Jehovah himself, after the battle of Rephidim, some five hundred years before, received its final accomplishment. The Amalekites never again appear in history as a distinct tribe.[2]

I was reminded of the poor Egyptian whom David found half dead, and brought to life again by giving him "a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins" to eat, and water to drink, by an incident which occurred to me when crossing the plain to Askelon. Far from any village, a sick Egyptian was lying by the roadside in the burning sun, and apparently almost dead with a terrible fever. He wanted nothing but "water! water!" which we were fortunately able to give him from our travelling-bottle; but we were obliged to pass on and leave him to his fate, whatever that might have been.

David's victory over the Amalekites was probably achieved on the very day that King Saul was defeated and slain on Gilboa; and when he had heard of that event, by which the way to the throne of Israel was open to himself, he took of the spoils, and sent presents to all the towns and villages where he used formerly to resort.[3] He acted in this matter upon a principle which his wise son has expressed after this fashion: "A man's gift maketh room for him,

[1] 1 Sam. xxx. 1–20. [2] Exod. xvii. 8–16. [3] 1 Sam. xxx. 26.

and bringeth him before great men."[1] His gifts speedily made room for him in Hebron, and prepared the hearts of all Judah to welcome him as their king.

It seems to have tasked all David's firmness and tact in government to control his heterogeneous troop of followers.

There were certainly some churlish sons of Belial amongst them, but this was not their general character. The servants of Nabal, in Carmel, gave a very different testimony concerning them: "The men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields."[2] They were, therefore, in no sense a lawless set of robbers. Nabal's taunt to the messengers, "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master,"[3] was as unjust as it was insolent. It does not follow that because "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented [or, rather, bitter of soul], gathered themselves unto him,"[4] that therefore they were the refuse and offscouring of the land, like a troop of irregular Turkish cavalry, or the followers of an outlawed Druse sheikh. The government of Saul had degenerated into a cruel despotism. David himself, and all his relations, had been obliged to flee from his outrageous and murderous jealousy; and there is abundant evidence that they were honorable and respectable people. Nor is it any wonder that many were in distress, and bitter of soul, under a king who could employ a savage Edomite to kill the whole family of the chief priest of the nation, merely because David had been innocently entertained for a night by them. The madness and ferocity of such a king would compel the noblest spirits in the land to flee unto David, and a large proportion of his retinue was actually composed of such men.

Even the debtors, in such a time of misrule, were, in most cases, better men than their creditors. Nearly everybody is in debt in these Oriental countries; and, owing to the tenure of land, the modes of raising taxes, and the claims of feudal chiefs, it is impossible for the villagers to keep free from it, either personally or as part of a community. Even in the cities, the number who

[1] Prov. xviii. 16. [2] 1 Sam. xxv. 15. [3] 1 Sam. xxv. 10. [4] 1 Sam. xxii. 2.

are more or less involved is far greater than those who stand square with the world. I hardly ever knew an estate in this country which was not found encumbered when the death of the owner brought out the truth; and very generally those who are the creditors are cold, cunning usurers, hated and hateful. The fact, therefore, that a man is in debt is not necessarily any reflection on his character; and, in times of misrule and apprehension like that of Saul, the best families are suddenly reduced by extortion to utter poverty. To raise the enormous sums demanded of the head of the house, and enforced by the bastinado, the wife and children sell and pledge everything they possess to these lenders, and raise money at ruinous rates of interest. The tyrant government, also, from motives easily understood, enforces the collection of such debts with a rigor that knows neither delay nor mercy. That some of David's company fled from just such extortion is highly probable, and they may have been the most estimable people of the land. It is pleasant to believe that the noble and generous David was surrounded by a fair proportion of kindred spirits, and that, in the midst of his sore trials and perplexities, his heart was sustained and comforted by the reflection that he was able to furnish an asylum to many innocent victims of regal oppression. This is distinctly stated in the case of Abiathar, who escaped from the slaughter of the priests at Nob,[1] and must have been equally so in regard to his own father and all his family.[2]

These modern dwellers about old Gath or Beit Jibrîn appear to be actually taller and more warlike than the average inhabitants of this region.

The sheikh and his family might well be descendants of the ancient giants, for they are rough, fierce-looking fellows, and, indeed, the whole population now make a very savage display of guns, pistols, crooked swords, double-edged khanjars, long knives, and whatever else can aid them to cut, stab, and hack the human body to pieces. The sheikh says that they are thus armed in order to keep at a distance the Bedawîn Arabs, who would otherwise eat up their ripening harvests. This may be so, though I have never seen them without arms, and those who can get nothing better

[1] 1 Sam. xxii. 20–23. [2] 1 Sam. xxii. 1.

carry tremendous clubs, like the weaver's beam of the giant, and in handling them they are as expert as any Irishman with his shillelah, and equally as dangerous.

Do these people now make any use of the sling, which, in the hand of David, was so fatal to their famous townsman?

I have seen the sling used in mimic warfare at Hasbeîya, on Mount Hermon, and there merely waged by the boys of the town. The deep gorge of the Busîs divides Hasbeîya into two parts, and, when the war-spirit was up in the community, the lads were accustomed to collect on opposite sides of this gorge, and fight desperate battles with their slings. They chased one another from cliff to cliff, as in real warfare, until one of the parties gave way, and retreated up the mountain. I have seen the air almost darkened by their whizzing pebbles, and so many serious accidents occurred that the authorities often interfered to abolish the rude sport; but whenever there is a fresh feud, or a revolt against the government amongst the old folks, the young ones return again to the fight with slings across the Busîs.

It must have required careful drilling and long practice before the seven hundred left-handed Benjamites "could sling stones at a hair-breadth, and not miss;" but this is a region where such a mode of warfare would be cultivated in ancient times, and be very effective.[1] The stones for the sling are everywhere at hand, and the country is cut up by deep gorges, with impracticable banks; and, before the invention of guns, there was no other weapon that could carry across these profound depths and reach the ranks of the enemy. David, while following his flocks over these rough mountains, practised other arts besides that of playing on the shepherd's pipe, for he became as expert in the use of the sling as any of the chosen men of Benjamin. He was manifestly one of nature's noblemen, born to excel in everything he undertook. Not only was he the most skilful musician, but the greatest poet; not merely the most daring shepherd, but the bravest soldier and the most successful general. It is nowhere stated in so many words that he possessed great physical strength, but this is implied in several anecdotes of his life. Without this he could not have wielded the sword of Go-

[1] Judg. xx. 16.

liath, and yet he chose that of all others for himself; and again, none but the very strongest could kill a lion and a bear in fair fight. What the lion is we all know, or at least imagine, and yet David says, "I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him."[1] The Syrian bear, still found on the higher mountains of this country, is perhaps equally to be dreaded in a close personal encounter. The inhabitants of Hermon say that when he is chased up the mountain he will cast back large stones upon his pursuers with terrible force and unerring aim. You need not expect me to vouch for the literal accuracy of this statement, but the Syrian bear is a very large and formidable antagonist. The stoutest hunter will not venture to attack him alone, nor without being thoroughly armed for the deadly strife. David, however, caught him, as he was running away with a kid from his flock, and slew him; and this when he was yet but a youth, ruddy, and of a fair countenance, so that Goliath disdained him as an antagonist. It is interesting to remember that these personal adventures of David, both with giants and with wild beasts, took place in these mountains immediately above us.

[1] 1 Sam. xvii. 35.

IX.

BEIT JIBRÎN TO HEBRON.

Distance from Beit Jibrîn to Hebron.—Wady el Feranj.—Terkûmieh, Tricomias.—'Ain el Kûff.—Mandrakes.—Route from Beit Jibrîn to Hebron.—Idhna, Jedna.—Neby Nûh.—Dûra, Adoraim.—Et Teffûh, Beth-tappuah.—Approach to Hebron.—Earliest Patriarchal Times.—Death and Burial of Sarah.—Tomb of the Patriarchs.—Mourning of the Egyptians at Jacob's Funeral.—Ceremonies attending the Death and Burial of Modern Sheikhs.—Threshing-floor of Atad.—Prominent Part taken by Women at Funerals.—Dirge.—Male Mourners.—Abraham's Negotiation for the Purchase of Machpelah.—Weighing of Money.—Specifications in Contracts.—The Stranger.—Intermediary Agents.—Hebron built before Zoan in Egypt.—Biblical References to Hebron.—Caleb.—David King in Hebron.—Hebron rarely mentioned by Ancient Historians.—Crusaders.—Anakims.—Zamzummims.—Giants.—Og, Eliezer of Damascus.—Rabbi Jochanan.—Mutawâly Sheikh.—Red Pottage.—Lentiles.—Jacob and Esau.—Retributive Justice.—Jacob a Fugitive from his Home.—Domestic Habits of the Patriarchs and Sheikhs of Bedawîn Tribes.—Jacob and Moses at the Well.—Covered Cisterns and Wells.—Significant in Connection with the Open Fountain.—Procession in Celebration of the Rite of Circumcision.—Antiquity of the Rite.—Eliezer's Mission to Mesopotamia.—Marriage restricted to Kindred.—Eliezer's Outfit with Provisions and Presents.—Women at the Fountain.—Rebekah at the Well.—Jewels and Ornaments.—Reception by Laban.—Rebekah and Isaac.—David reigns in Hebron.—Subjective Basis of many of his Lyric Compositions.—The Eighteenth Psalm.—Natural Features of Southern Palestine suggestive Symbols of Jehovah.—Horn of Salvation.—Horns of the Altar.—Hebron a City of Refuge.—Personal Adventure.—Nâblus a City of Refuge.—Purpose for which Cities of Refuge were Established.—Scant Justice accorded to the Innocent.—Talmudical Traditions.—Refuge.—Transference from the Visible Symbol to the Spiritual Truth symbolized.

April 19th.

THE distance to Hebron, you say, is about eighteen miles, through a mountainous country, with but few inhabited villages.

Two roads lead over the mountains in that direction: one along Wady el Feranj, which our muleteers wish to take; and another south of it, by the villages of Idhna and et Teffûh. I propose that we take the latter; but the men will go direct, and pitch our tents on the threshing-floor of Hebron. You will not lose much by the

choice of the more southern route, for there is very little along the other to see, and I can easily describe it, as I have traversed it more than once.

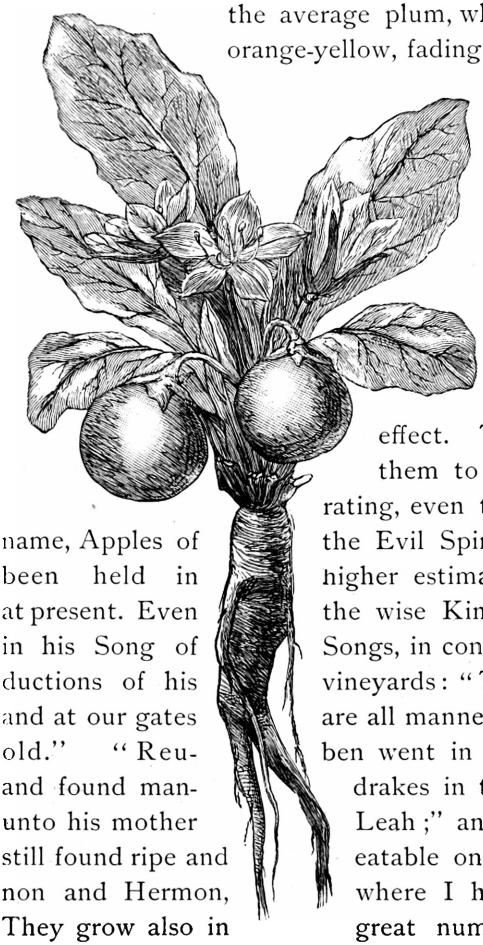
For some distance east of Beit Jibrîn Wady el Feranj is broad and fertile, and the ascent is very gradual. Side valleys come in from the right and left, opening up long vistas in the heart of the mountains. One of them descends from the vicinity of Terkûmieh, the Tricomias of ecclesiastical celebrity. I remember that on my first visit to this region we found at the mouth of that valley a large encampment of Arabs, with whose goats, dogs, and half-naked children, we were both amused and annoyed. Escaping from the clamorous importunity of those Ishmaelites, we came in about two hours to 'Ain el Kûff, the only fountain in Wady el Feranj. Here were many people with jars and skin bottles, to carry water to their homes on the mountain—an unmistakable evidence that good water is scarce in that region; and had not the muleteers filled their own bottles, we would have suffered no slight inconvenience in the long ascent which followed, for we found no water from that fountain to the vineyards of Hebron.

We stopped to rest, about half-way up Wady 'Ain el Kûff, at a sheepfold under the southern cliff of the ravine; and there I saw the mandrake, with its broad leaves and green apples, and my curiosity was excited by the discussion which followed in our party about the singular contract between Rachel and Leah for Reuben's mandrakes.[1]

Into that we shall not now enter, nor question the motives which induced Rachel to make the purchase. I, for one, don't know. As to the mandrakes themselves something more may be said. The Hebrew name is dudâîm—love-plant; the Arabic, tŭffâh el jan—apples of the jan, or evil spirits. It is the Mandragora officinalis of botanists, and of the family Solanaceæ. It has a long and large tap-root, frequently forked, which was said to resemble the shape of a man. In early spring it puts forth many leaves, about four inches wide and a foot long, and lying nearly flat on the ground; in shape they are like the lettuce, but of a darker green. The flower-stalks are of unequal lengths, from three inches or more

[1] Gen. xxx. 14–16.

to scarcely any stem, each bearing a single purple flower, similar in form to that of the potato. In size and shape the fruit resembles the average plum, while in color it is of a dull orange-yellow, fading into green. It lies in the centre of the leaves, like an egg in a nest, and, when ripe, contains a soft fleshy pulp, possessing a peculiar but not very unpleasant smell, and a sweetish taste. They are said to produce dizziness, but I have seen the natives eat them without experiencing any such effect. The Arabs, however, believe them to be stimulating and exhilarating, even to insanity; and hence the name, Apples of the Evil Spirits. They appear to have been held in higher estimation in ancient times than at present. Even the wise King Solomon mentions them in his Song of Songs, in connection with the choice productions of his vineyards: "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old." "Reuben went in the days of wheat-harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah;" and it is then that they are still found ripe and eatable on the lower ranges of Lebanon and Hermon, where I have frequently seen them. They grow also in great numbers in the fields around the desolate ruins of old Shiloh.



We have paid no attention to the country through which we have been passing for the last two hours.

It is one of the most forsaken and desolate routes in Palestine. From the church of Santa Hanneh the path follows the valley for an hour, then rises over a considerable ridge, and again descends down a narrow glen in front of the village of Idhna, which we are approaching. There is little to detain us at this place; for though

the site is no doubt that of the Jedna mentioned in the Onomasticon, there are no remains of antiquity about it, nor can it be mentioned in connection with any Scriptural name. The village is small, divided by a shallow wady, and, as in many other places, the inhabitants—rude Moslem peasants—are separated into two antagonistic clans, occupying opposite quarters, and each headed by their sheikh, with his kŭsr, or tower. In the oft-recurring neighborhood feuds they take sides, following their leaders much as did the Highland clans of Scotland in former times. The surrounding country is broken up by ravines, which run down northwards, and unite with Wady el Feranj.

The road from Idhna to et Teffûh passes through a wilderness of rocky ridges and barren hills, and we shall find the ascent tedious and fatiguing. Here and there one sees in the distance a white-domed wely, generally near a modern village or the indistinct ruins of an ancient one. On a hill far to the south we see the tomb of Neby Nûh, the Prophet Noah, which indicates the position of Dûra, a place identified with the Biblical Adoraim. It is mentioned in 2 Chronicles xi. 9 amongst the places fortified by Rehoboam, and associated with Maresha, which is many miles to the west of it.

Teffûh is undoubtedly the Beth-tappuah mentioned in Joshua as amongst the "cities with their villages" in the inheritance of Judah, and one of nine, including Hebron.[1] Its Hebrew name signifies place or house of apples, and it may have been celebrated for this fruit even in the time of Joshua.

It occupies a very lofty position, and is surrounded by fine olive-groves, vineyards, and fig-orchards—a very agreeable contrast to most of the region which we have traversed to-day. Are there any remains of antiquity there?

Built into the walls of some of the rude habitations of the natives, and scattered about the place, are a few large stones and old foundations, which belonged to ancient edifices, houses or castles, perhaps both—enough to justify the claim to its significant name. The descent from et Teffûh to Hebron will take nearly two hours, and for the last half-hour the road leads through the vast vineyards of that city.

[1] Josh. xv. 20, 53.

Whatever may be true in regard to the road hither, the appearance of Hebron itself, lying in deep repose along the vale of Mamre, is quite beautiful. The time of our visit is, doubtless, most favorable, for Nature upon these mountains is now in her holiday dress; and when we began to descend towards the city, the lengthening shadows of the western hills had just dropped their sober curtains over the scene, softening its somewhat rugged features, and thereby greatly enhancing its charms.

Seen under other circumstances, the impression might be much less agreeable; but, apart from natural scenery, no intelligent traveller can approach Hebron with indifference. No city in Palestine so carries one back to earliest patriarchal times. Manners and customs, and modes of action, and even idioms of speech, have changed but little since the day when Abraham dwelt here amongst "the sons of Heth." Take the account of the death and burial of Sarah, found in the twenty-third chapter of Genesis, as an example. "Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." There is something formal in this remark; but the act is in perfect accordance with present customs, which demand that there should be loud, boisterous, uncontrollable weeping, mourning, beating of the breast, waving of the arms, and every other external manifestation of great sorrow. Such was this funeral mourning made by the great emeer Abraham in manifestation of his affection for his beloved wife, and his great grief at her death; but, besides this public tribute to the memory of Sarah, he no doubt sincerely lamented her loss in the privacy of his own tent.

The manners and customs of any people form a very interesting study, and it is especially gratifying to meet with anything that illustrates those of Bible times.

There is no lack of examples in the Sacred Scriptures which furnish occasion for such illustrations; and in reference to the three great epochs in human life—marriage, birth, and death—Oriental customs, always numerous, have ever been singularly striking and suggestive, and perpetuated in this country from age to age, down to our own time. Our present position and surroundings, in full view of Machpelah, naturally calls attention to the close of life, and

the funeral customs connected therewith. There Abraham came to bury Sarah, and to weep for her. There Isaac and Esau buried Abraham, and into that cave were placed the remains of Isaac and Rebekah. "There," Jacob said, when dying, "I buried Leah;"[1] and thither, too, his sons carried the embalmed body of Jacob out of Egypt, when he died, and buried him by the side of his wife.[2]

Dr. Kitto maintains that Joseph carried his father through the Great Desert, round the south end of the Dead Sea, then through the land of Moab, and, crossing the Jordan near Jericho, there held the great mourning of the Egyptians in the floor of Atad, which he locates between Jericho and the Jordan; and the doctor rather complains that no one has taken the trouble to notice this extraordinary fact.

The reason, I suppose, is, that no one believes the story. There is not a particle of evidence for such a wonderful journey in the Bible account of the funeral, nor does Josephus give a hint that he had ever heard of it. Moses, who wrote on the east of the Jordan, simply says that the floor at Atad, called Abel-mizraim, was on the other, or west, side of it, without stating where.[3] Jerome, indeed, identifies it with Bethagla, and locates that village near Jericho; but this identification has no authority in itself; and nothing less than the assertion of the Bible would enable me to believe this theory of Dr. Kitto, for it would be the most extraordinary journey on record.

That must have been a very remarkable funeral. There went up with Joseph "all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt;" and besides the families, flocks, and herds of Joseph and his brethren, "there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days."[4] Do the ceremonies attending the death and burial of modern patriarchs and great men in this country resemble those of Jacob's children on that occasion?

I have witnessed imposing and prolonged funeral ceremonies of

[1] Gen. xlix. 31. [2] Gen. l. 7, 13. [3] Gen. l. 11. [4] Gen. l. 1–14.

sheikhs and princes on the Lebanon and elsewhere in this land, and once on this very spot where we are now encamped, and in full view of Machpelah, ceremonies which vividly reminded me of that great mourning which gave to the threshing-floor of Atad the significant name of Abel-mizraim, "the grievous mourning of the Egyptians." Many years ago I was encamped for some days just where our tents now stand, but this pretty little plain then presented quite a different appearance. A very aged and venerated Moslem sheikh had died, and was buried in one of those dome-shaped tombs near the eastern end of the cemetery. The concourse at the funeral was immense, and ever increasing by the arrival of delegations from the surrounding neighborhood, and the mourning was probably as boisterous as that at the floor of Atad. Whether or not it was continued for seven days I cannot say, but it was kept up without cessation until I left.

Under the shade of those old olive-trees near the north-west corner of the cemetery was gathered a large company of women in three concentric circles. Those composing the outside ring were sober, aged matrons, seated upon the ground. They took but little active part in the solemnities. The next circle were younger women, all dressed in long blue robes reaching to their feet; and upon their heads was a yellow keffîyeh, with party-colored stripes, closely resembling a large Roman scarf; and each carried a white or blue handkerchief, which was kept constantly waving or flourishing as they marched slowly around the ring, clapping their hands, and chanting either a monotonous funeral dirge, or some impromptu verses celebrating the deeds of prowess or benevolence of the departed. It is customary at times to flourish long staffs or spears, and even drawn swords, and to dance with a slow movement and in an irregular manner, generally pacing about, and raising and depressing the body. This unnatural ceremony on the part of the women is impressive, and even barbaric, and chiefly confined to the Bedawîn Arabs. At times they stopped, and, flinging their arms and handkerchiefs about in wild frenzy, screamed and wailed like maniacs. The inner circle was entirely composed of young girls, who, with hand joined in hand, ran round like children about a May-pole, sometimes slowly, and at others very rap-

idly, leaping and skipping about like young kids. Occasionally a company from the middle circle who had the shrillest voices would start off down the plain to the east side, where was the tomb of the sheikh; and, joined by the party of mourners constantly there, they would dance, and scream, and shriek around the grave in the wildest and most frantic manner. Their funeral dirge did not exceed half a dozen lines; and both the notes and the words were repeated without cessation, generally by the older women composing the outer circle, all day and long into the night, without variation or addition.

The male mourners were assembled in a separate group farther back in the olive-grove; but their lamentations were less persistent and vehement than those of the women, and were mainly limited to fresh outbursts at the approach of a party of friends or relatives from the adjoining villages, on which occasions they would all rise and go forth to meet them; and, mingling their lamentations with those of the new-comers, their mourning and wailing would be continued until they returned to their place under the olive-trees.

The place, the occasion, and the whole scene must have brought to your mind the funerals of the Hebrew patriarchs and their wives here at Machpelah in the ancient days; and should a holy and venerated man like Abraham, or a woman like Sarah his wife, die now at Hebron, I suppose these modern sons and daughters of Heth would celebrate the event in much the same way, not as indicating so much their sympathy with the family as in obedience to custom and in honor of the dead.

Certainly, and Abraham's negotiation for the cave in the field of Machpelah is also very Oriental and striking. Such a purchase was quite necessary. There has always been in this country the utmost exclusiveness in regard to tombs; and although these polite Hittites said, "Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead," Abraham was too experienced an Oriental not to know that this was merely compliment.[1] The thing was quite out of the question; nor would Abraham himself have consented thus to mingle

[1] Gen. xxiii. 6.

his dead with the dust and bones of strangers, and therefore pressed his request to be allowed to purchase. Such a negotiation is not easily arranged. If you or I had occasion to make a similar contract to-day with these modern Hittites, we should find it even more delicate and tedious than did Abraham. I do not believe we would succeed, even with the aid of all the mediators we might employ.

In concluding the purchase of the sepulchre with Ephron, we see the process of a modern bargain admirably carried out. The polite son of Zohar says, "Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead."[1] Of course! And just so I have had houses and fields and horses given to me, and the by-standers called upon to witness the deed, and a score of protestations and oaths taken to seal the truth of the donation; all which I knew meant nothing whatever, just as Abraham understood the true intent and value of Ephron's bakhshîsh. He therefore urged forward the purchase, and brought the owner to state his price, which he did at four hundred shekels of silver. Now, without knowing the relation between silver and a bit of barren rock at that time, and in this place, my experience of such transactions leads me to suppose that this price was treble the actual value of the field. But, says the courteous Hittite, "My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead."[2] How often you hear almost those identical words on similar occasions! and yet, acting upon their apparent import, you would soon find out what and how little they meant. Abraham knew that too; and as he was then in no humor to chaffer with the owner, whatever might be his price, he proceeded forthwith to weigh out the money. Even this is still common; for although coins have now a definite name, size, and value, yet some merchants carry a small apparatus by which they weigh each coin, to see that it has not been tampered with by Jewish clippers. In like manner, the specifications in the contract are just such as are found in modern deeds. It is not enough that you purchase a well-known lot; the contract must

[1] Gen. xxiii. 11.

[2] Gen. xxiii. 15.

mention everything that belongs to it, and certify that the fountains or wells in it, trees upon it, etc., are sold with the field. If you rent a house, not only the building itself, but every room in it, above and below, down to the kitchen, pantry, stable, and hen-coop, must be specified. Thus Abraham bought "the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure."[1] I see this negotiation in all its details enacted before me. The venerable patriarch, bowed down with sorrow, rises from beside the bier on which lay the lifeless body of his beloved Sarah. He stands before the people—the attitude of respect which etiquette still demands. He addresses them as Beni Heth—sons of Heth; and in the same words he would address these Arabs about us as Beni el Jehâlîn, Beni Keîs, Beni Yemen, according as each tribe is now designated.

Again, Abraham begins his plea with a reference to his condition amongst them as a stranger—the very idiom now in use—I am a stranger. And this plea appeals strongly to the sympathies of the hearers. It is by such an appeal that the beggar now seeks to enlist your compassion, and succeeds, because all over the East the stranger is greatly to be pitied. He is liable to be plundered and treated as an enemy; and amongst these denizens of the desert strangers are generally enemies, and dealt with as such. The plea, therefore, was natural and effective. Abraham stood and bowed himself to the children of Heth; another act of respect in accordance with modern manners, and the next step is equally so. He does not apply directly to the owner of the field, but requests the neighbors to act as mediators on his behalf; and were we anxious to succeed in a similar bargain with these people, we must resort to the same roundabout mode. There is scarcely anything in the habits of Orientals more annoying to us Occidentals than this universal custom of employing mediators to pass between you and those with whom you wish to do business. Nothing can be done without them. A merchant cannot sell a piece of print, nor a farmer a yoke of oxen, nor any one rent a house, buy a horse, or get a wife, without a succession of go-betweens. Of course, Abraham knew that this matter of the field could not be brought

[1] Gen. xxiii. 17.

about without the intervention of the neighbors of Ephron, and therefore he applies to them first. How much manœuvring, taking aside, whispering, nodding of heads, and clasping of hands there was before the real owner was brought within reasonable terms, we are not told; but at length all the preliminary obstacles and conventional impediments are surmounted, according to the most approved style of etiquette, and the contract is closed in the audience of all the people that went in at the gate of the city.[1] This also is true to life. When any sale is now to be effected in a town or village, especially of real estate, the whole population gather about the parties at the usual place of concourse, around or near the gate, where there is one. There all take part, and enter into the pros and cons with as much earnestness as if it were their own individual affair. By these means the operation, in all its circumstances and details, is known to many witnesses, and the thing is "made sure" without any written contract. In fact, up to this day, in this very city of Hebron, a purchase thus witnessed is legal; while the best drawn deeds of a modern lawyer, though signed, sealed, and attested, would be of no avail without such living witnesses.

Sunday, April 20th.

"Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt," as stated in Numbers xiii. 22, and has, of course, a very long history from that day to this; and from the fact that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spent much of their lives in or near it, and, with their wives, were buried here, it has always been held, I suppose, in high veneration by their descendants.

Not only Jews, but all who claim to be related to them—Arabs and Edomites, and other Oriental tribes—have shared in this veneration; and, since the Gentile world has adopted the religion of Abraham—that father of the faithful—its name and fame have extended to the ends of the earth, and must continue till time shall be no more. When the spies came this way, the giants of the Anakim family resided in it, but they were expelled by Caleb, to whom the place was given by Joshua.[2] After this we hear but little of Hebron until the time of David, who made it his residence during

[1] Gen. xxiii. 18.

[2] Josh. xv. 13, 14.

the seven years in which he reigned over the tribe of Judah.[1] When he became king of all Israel he removed to Jerusalem, made that city the permanent capital of the Jewish commonwealth, and Hebron is rarely mentioned after this in sacred history. Neither the prophets nor the evangelists name it, nor does the Saviour appear to have visited it; yet we know from the Maccabees and Josephus that it continued to be an important city subsequent to the time of the captivity; and Eusebius, Jerome, and a host of later writers speak of it, generally in connection with the tombs of the patriarchs. The Moslems got possession in the seventh century, and have continued to inhabit it ever since, with short interruptions during the time of the Crusades. Thus its existence and identity have been perpetuated and guaranteed without a break to our day.

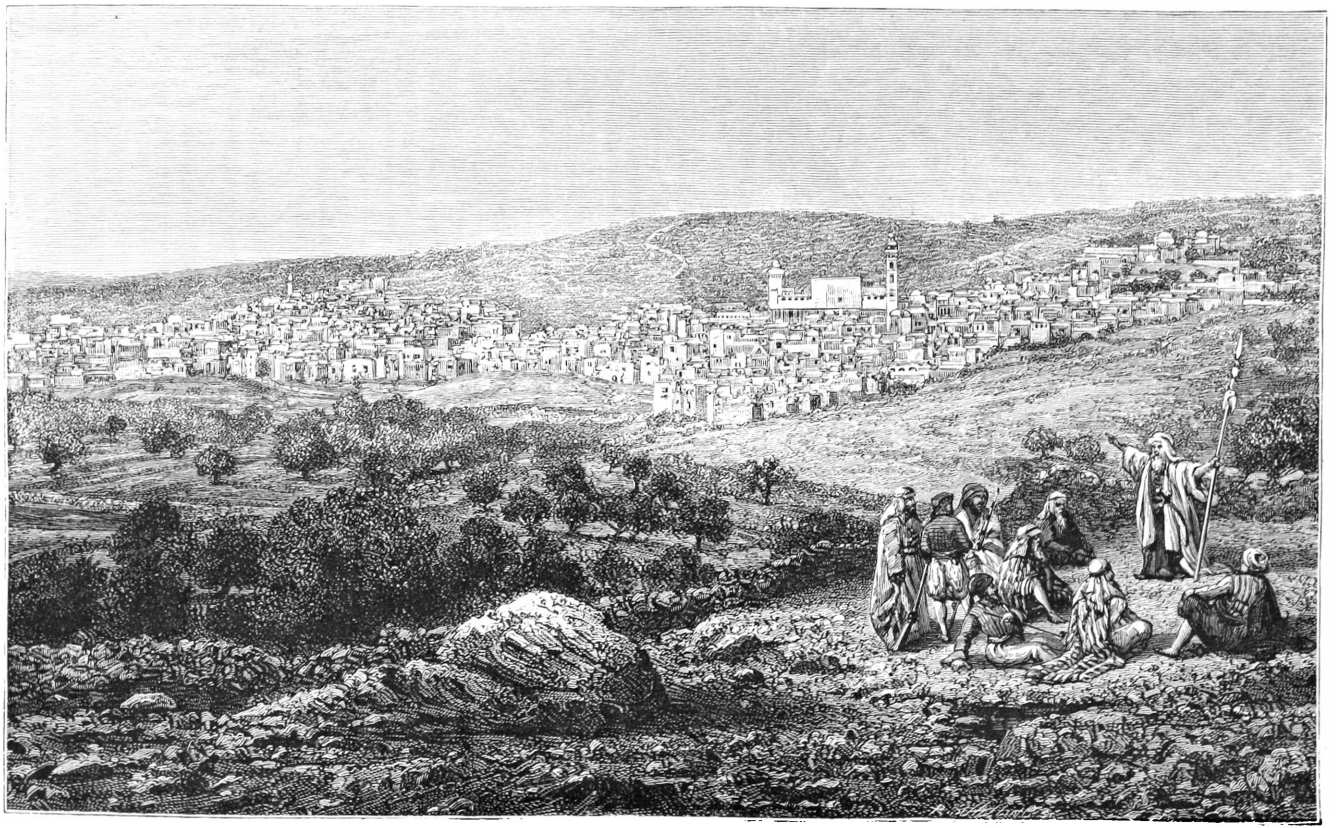
Is it not strange that though the Crusaders had possession of Hebron, and free access to the cave of Machpelah, their historians have given us no intelligible description of either?

Not to those who have waded through their confused and rambling annals, where one finds everything he does not want, and very little of what he does. Every valuable geographical and topographical fact in reference to the Holy Land contained in the large folios of the Gesta Dei per Francos might be condensed into a few pages. If there had been a single intelligent student of Biblical geography in this country at that time, we might now have important light from the Middle Ages to guide us in many a doubtful search after a lost locality.

The Anakims of the ancient "city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron," seem to have been the proverbial type of those giants so often mentioned in the Bible.[2] We hear of them in Moab under the name of Emims, "a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; which also were accounted giants."[3] The same were found amongst the Ammonites, and called Zamzummims; and Og, king of Bashan, remained of the giants at the time of Moses.[4] What are we to understand, and how much, from these and other notices of this peculiar race?

Nothing less, certainly, than that there existed men of gigantic stature from the remotest antiquity, even before the Deluge, for

[1] 2 Sam. ii. 1, 4. [2] Josh. xv. 13. [3] Deut. ii. 10. [4] Deut. ii. 20; iii. 11.



EL KHÛLÎL—HEBRON.

these "men of renown" are mentioned in the sixth of Genesis. That there were in times past men of extraordinary size is a tradition wonderfully prevalent to this day all over the East. It not only runs through legendary lore, but is embodied in numerous monuments of a more substantial character, as the tomb of Noah at Kerak, in the Bŭkâ'a, and that of Seth at Neby Sheet, on the eastern side of the same plain. To what extent such fables corroborate the historic facts of the Bible every one must decide for himself; but the traditions themselves, and these commemorative monuments, are extremely ancient, reaching back to the times of myth and fable. The truth appears to be that there were amongst the governing races of primitive times certain families of "great stature." This peculiarity was carefully perpetuated and increased by such marriage restrictions as tended to that result, and something similar has been found amongst the inhabitants of the Pacific Islands. For anything beyond this, tradition, that delights in the marvellous and monstrous, is probably accountable. Every distant object seen through her telescope is distorted and vastly exaggerated.

If we pass from fact to fable, we may pause a moment on the first steps in the scale of exaggeration, and hear the returned spies terrifying their brethren at Kadesh by their false report: "All the people that we saw in it [the land] are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."[1] You may now enter any coffee-shop in the land on a mild summer evening, and, as twilight shadows settle on the silent auditors, listen to the professional hakawatey amplifying the dimensions of these ancient men of renown, until—the coffee sipped and the nargileh out—the hearers separate, stroking their beards, and muttering, Ma sha Allah!—"What God willeth!" But the flights of these story-tellers are tame and timid in comparison with the unfettered excursions of rabbinical imagination. Hear what they say about Og, king of Bashan: The soles of his feet were forty miles long, and the waters of the Deluge only reached to his ankles. He, being one of the antediluvian giants, escaped the gen-

[1] Numb. xiii. 32, 33.

eral destruction, and reappears in subsequent history as Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's servant. Abraham, who was only of the size of seventy-four ordinary men, could yet scold most terribly. Under his rebuke Og trembled so violently that one of his double teeth dropped out, and this the patriarch made into an ivory bedstead for himself, and ever after slept upon it. When Moses, who was ten ells high, attacked this same Og—by this time King of Bashan—he seized an axe ten ells in length, jumped ten ells high, and then struck with all his might—where? why, on his ankle. That blow finally killed him; for Rabbi Jochanan says, "I have been a grave-digger, and once, when I was chasing a roe, it fled into a shin-bone: I ran after it, and followed it for three miles, but could neither overtake it nor see any end to the bone; so I returned, and was told that this was the shin-bone of Og, king of Bashan." Go to Kânah, and the old Mutawâly sheikh there will entertain you till midnight with an account of the process by which Abraham tamed his unruly servant Og into obedience somewhere in the marshes of the Hûleh, below Tell el Kâdy. Coming back from such grotesque and monstrous fables, we may be thankful for the sober and credible statements of the Bible, which only require us to believe that there were in primitive times certain persons of very large stature who were called giants.

In my rambles about the outskirts of the town last evening I lit upon a company of Ishmaelites sitting round a large saucepan, regaling themselves with their dinner. As they said "Tŭfŭddâl"—oblige us—very earnestly, I sat down amongst them, and, doubling some of their bread spoon-fashion, plunged into the saucepan as they did, and found their food very savory indeed. The composition was made of the red kind of lentiles which we examined in the market at Jaffa; and I can readily believe, from the little experience I had of its appetizing fragrance and substantial taste, that to a hungry man it must have been very tempting. I suppose Esau used the same kind of spoon when Jacob gave him bread and pottage of lentiles.[1]

It is the only one in fashion throughout the land amongst the poorer classes, and necessarily so in the tent of the Bedawîn.

[1] Gen. xxv. 34.

Lentiles were amongst the presents brought to David at Mahanaim, in Gilead, his head-quarters during the rebellion of his son Absalom.[1] They are mentioned in other passages of the Old Testament, as when "the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles," and Shammah, "one of the mighty men whom David had, stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines."[2] And again, in the typical representation of the siege of Jerusalem, Ezekiel is commanded to put lentiles in one vessel with wheat, barley, and other grains, and make bread.[3] On occasions lentiles are still thus used in this country and Egypt, and it is interesting to find on the tomb-paintings in that land the representation of a man cooking lentiles, probably sodding a mess of "red pottage."



LENTILE—ERVUM LENS—'ADAS.

There are two principal varieties—the pale red, and the dark brown; and just below us is a field of the latter, in which the lentiles are not ripe; and another yonder, on the southern slope of the mountain, where they are sown amongst the olive-trees.

You notice that the plant resembles the pea-vine, but does not grow more than a foot high, and the leaves are differently arranged on the stem, are smaller, and more delicate. The flowers come out in clusters of three or more, and are purple in color, and succeeded by flat pods, similar in shape to those of the pea. The lentiles in each pod, however, are less in number, much smaller in size, and convex on both sides, hence the Latin name lens, a term which has been adopted in optical science. Lentiles are pulled like flax, not

[1] 2 Sam. xvii. 28. [2] 2 Sam. xxiii. 8, 11, 12. [3] Ezek. iv. 9.

cut with the sickle; but they are threshed out and winnowed in the same manner as wheat, though somewhat later in the season.

It is a singular fact that European children born in this country are extravagantly fond of the 'adas pottage. Generally, however, it is made out of the brown, or bronze-colored, and not of this red kind. I can testify, also, that, when cooking, it diffuses far and wide an extremely enticing odor. It was, therefore, no slight temptation to Esau, returning "faint" and famished from an unsuccessful hunt in this burning climate.

It has always seemed to me an act peculiarly unlovely and unbrotherly in Jacob to seize such an opportunity to cheat Esau out of his birthright.

Doubtless it was so: nor do I suppose that it was the first time he had overreached his careless brother. This, however, deserved to be recorded, because it was the grand pivot upon which turned all Jacob's life—the antecedent act which led directly on to that odious deception practised upon poor old blind Isaac, then to Jacob's flight into Mesopotamia, his marriages, etc. It is instructive to notice how one sin prepares the way for and seduces to the commission of greater. This private purchase would do Jacob no good unless the father confirmed the sale. When, therefore, Isaac was about to transmit, by an act of solemn blessing, the birthright, with all its rich covenants and promises, to Esau, Jacob and his mother saw that their whole previous manœuvres to secure these would utterly fail unless they could now succeed in deluding the helpless father also.

It is not difficult to imagine by what process of sophistry Jacob might reconcile his conduct with his conscience. I believe the unsophisticated reason of man always refuses to ratify the rights of mere primogeniture, as established by custom or law amongst many nations. In the case of Jacob and Esau, it is also to be remembered that they were twins, born at the same time; and Jacob, no doubt, felt that his brother had really no valid claims of precedence which should entitle him to the inestimable blessings involved, in this instance, in the question of birthright; so also thought his mother. Then it is highly probable that Jacob knew that Esau disbelieved, or, at least, despised the religious covenants and pro-

mises connected with the line of family descent, and that he was utterly unfit to be trusted with matters of such high import. And in this, also, he judged correctly. And, further, it is nearly certain that Jacob had largely augmented the common estate; while Esau, by his wild and idle life, had rather squandered than added to it. He therefore felt that he had the best right to it, and so he had. Add to this a spice of chagrin at the obvious partiality of the father for the idle Esau, for no better reason, as appears, than "because he did eat of his venison," and we have materials enough from which Jacob could work out a tissue of specious reasons for self-justification.

Success in fraud, as usual, entailed a long train of retributive sorrows. Jacob was immediately obliged to fly from his beloved home, and his fond mother, largely implicated in the crime, never again saw her darling son. After a long and perilous journey to Mesopotamia, he was himself subjected to a series of cruel deceptions and frauds practised upon him by his selfish father-in-law, and, when compelled to flee from this intolerable annoyance, he had to humble himself to the dust and plead for his life before the brother he had so often and so grossly injured; and, long after this, he was again deceived by his own sons in the matter of his beloved Joseph. Few histories are more instructive than this of Jacob, or better illustrate the involved and complicated machinery of divine Providence.

There are some curious incidents in this long story which forcibly illustrate the habits and manners of those primitive times. For example, it appears that Jacob, though the son of a wealthy emeer, was actually cooking his own mess of pottage.

There is nothing in this contrary even to present usage in the country. I have seen rich and luxurious citizens occupied in the same way, and this is still more common amongst the Arabs of the desert. So also Esau, one would have thought, might easily have sent some of the numerous servants to hunt for venison on the important occasion of receiving the parental blessing; but this, too, is quite natural in the East. I have had many opportunities of seeing the great sheikhs of the Anazeh, Beni Sŭkhr, and other tribes of Arabs, and they were in no way distinguished, either by dress or

manners, from their humblest followers. Their garments were often more worn and greasy than those of the servants, nor did they hesitate to bear their full share of any business that was going on. Indeed, there is a rude etiquette which requires these chiefs to be foremost in all matters of hospitality as well as hardship which falls to the lot of themselves or their followers. So, also, the fact that Laban's daughters were keeping the flocks, and Jacob's mother carrying water from the well, and other similar examples, do not contradict the customs even of modern wealthy Eastern shepherds. And who that has travelled much in this country has not often arrived at a well in the heat of the day which was surrounded with numerous flocks of sheep waiting to be watered? I once saw such a scene on the burning plains of Northern Syria. Half-naked, fierce-looking men were drawing water in leather buckets; flock after flock was brought up, watered, and sent away, and, when all the men had ended their work, then several women and girls brought their flocks and drew water for them. Thus it was with Jethro's daughters when "Moses stood up and helped them," and thus, no doubt, it would have been with Rachel, if Jacob had not rolled away the stone and watered her sheep. I have frequently seen wells closed with large stones, though in this part of the country it is not commonly done, because water is not so scarce and precious. It is otherwise, however, in the dreary deserts.

Cisterns are generally covered over with a large slab, having an aperture in it of sufficient size to let down the leather bucket or earthen jar. Into this hole a heavy stone is thrust, often such as to require the united strength of two or three men to remove. The same is seen occasionally over wells of living water; but, where the supply of water is abundant, no such precaution is needed. It was either at one of these cisterns, or less abundant and more precious wells, that Jacob met Rachel, and, being a strong man, he was able to remove the stone and water the flock.

I have repeatedly found wells closed up tight and the mouth plastered over with mortar. Such wells are reserved until times of greatest need, when all other sources of supply have failed. This may illustrate the passage in Zechariah xiii. 1: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the in-

habitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness"—a beautiful and significant promise, which many familiar customs of the people in this country shed light upon and render emphatic. Not only are fountains often sealed up until times of utmost need, and then opened for public use, but, when this is not the case, they are commonly far off from the villages, in secluded valleys; and, on account of the difficulty of carrying water to their homes, the women take their soiled clothes, a kettle, and some wood down to them, and there do their washing. This custom may have suggested to Zechariah the figure of "a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." Again, the inhabitants of most of the villages in Palestine select one or more sheep in autumn, which they every evening take to the open fountain, and thoroughly wash from all defilements. Now, Christ is not only the Good Shepherd, and his people the sheep of his pasture, but he is also the fountain in which their sins and pollutions are washed away. This fountain, long sealed up, was opened by the nails and the spear on Calvary, and not merely for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but for all whom they typically represented and included. Millions have been washed in the Gospel fountain, and yet its waters are as abundant and efficacious to cleanse from sin as ever. It is the very substance and central truth of the glad tidings to all nations that this fountain has indeed been opened, that whosoever will may wash and be cleansed.

What does this noisy and irregular procession, passing in front of our tents, and proceeding in the direction of the town, signify?

Our friend here says it is a circumcision, and it is generally attended with just such music and buffoonery.

It is interesting, certainly, to find this rite still practised in the very place where it was first instituted by command of God to Abraham, nearly four thousand years ago. Ishmael, too, the great ancestor of these Arabs, was amongst the very first to receive the rite.[1]

If you have any curiosity to study this subject in detail, you will find the process, and the accompanying feasts and ceremonies, minutely explained by Lane in his Modern Egyptians. This be-

[1] Gen. xvii. 23.

fore us is evidently a small affair, for the accompanying rabble are rude in the extreme, and poorly clad. The whole thing resembles a festal frolic more than a religious ceremony; but even in the processions of the rich, on such occasions, there are commonly two or three buffoons along with the musicians, to make sport by their outlandish costumes and ridiculous behavior.

What do you say to the arguments of those who maintain that Abraham was not the first that practised circumcision—that, in fact, the Father of the Faithful borrowed it from the Egyptians, the Ethiopians, or Colchians?

I have very little interest in such speculations. Abraham received this rite by revelation, and adopted it in obedience to a direct command of God. He received it also as the seal of a most important covenant. I care not whether anybody ever used a somewhat similar custom or not before his time. It may be so, though there is no certain evidence of the fact. To me it seems far more probable that the rite was communicated to the priests in Egypt through Joseph, who married into their family or tribe, than that the Israelites borrowed it from them. As to the testimony of Herodotus, who came into Egypt fifteen centuries after, and, with great learning and research, often writes a good deal of nonsense, I refuse utterly to put it in the same category with that of Moses. The great founder of the Jewish commonwealth—the greatest law-giver on record—born and bred in Egypt, states the facts in relation to the introduction of circumcision amongst his people. A traveller and historian—a foreigner and a Greek—comes along much later, and makes statements which are partly true, partly erroneous, as Josephus shows in his answer to Apion; and then sceptical authors, more than twenty centuries later still than Herodotus, bring up his imperfect statements, and, twisting and expanding them, attempt to prove that Abraham did not receive circumcision from God, as Moses plainly says he did, but from the Egyptians. Not with such weapons can the veracity of Moses be successfully assailed.

It is, however, very remarkable that this singular rite did actually spread into many countries; that it has been retained not only by Jews and Moslems all over the world, but that even some Christian sects have adopted it, as the Copts and Abyssinians. We need

not pursue this subject any farther at present; but it is certainly an emphatic corroboration of the book of Genesis, to stand in the plain of Mamre and witness the ceremonies of that solemn religious rite which Abraham here received as a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised.[1]

We are reminded by the firing of guns, the beating of the everlasting tubble, the singing and clapping of hands, and the general hubbub always attendant upon native weddings, that it was from this place Abraham sent his faithful servant into Mesopotamia to find and to bring a wife for Isaac.

Yes; and the account of this embassy in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis furnishes many allusions to Oriental customs, which modern manners beautifully illustrate. Chief servants in the families of emeers and sheikhs still exercise great influence and authority; and such was the confidence and respect accorded to Eliezer, that Abraham at one time seriously contemplated making him his heir—a result not uncommon in these Oriental countries in all ages down to the present day.

Another thing very noticeable is the great solicitude of Abraham to have his son marry one of his own kindred. This is in exact correspondence with the customs of Eastern nobility; nor need we limit the remark to the higher classes. Certain degrees of affinity excepted, a relative always has the preference in matrimonial negotiations. The strict injunction of Abraham, therefore, to bring none but a relative from his own family, though enforced by religious considerations, was in no sense a departure from established usages and social laws in regard to marriage.

The mode of swearing fidelity required of Eliezer, by placing his hand under the thigh of Abraham, seems to have been peculiar to the patriarchs, and may have had reference to that promised Seed who was to proceed from Abraham's loins, according to the then figurative style of speaking on this subject. In the present case there would be more than ordinary propriety in this significant action, inasmuch as the oath taken had direct and exclusive reference to the preservation of that line of descent through which this promised seed was to come.

[1] Rom. iv. 11.

The preparation and outfit for this journey agree in all respects with the persons concerned, the nature of the country, and the habits of the people. Eliezer took ten camels loaded with provisions and presents; and such an expedition could not now be undertaken from Hebron with any other animals, nor with a less number. The diligent servant, no doubt, selected the most direct route, which would be through Palestine, along the west side of the Jordan and the lakes, into the Bŭkâ'a, and out through the land of Hamath to the Euphrates, and thence to the city of Nahor, in Mesopotamia. Such a journey is both long and dangerous—far beyond what is indicated to an ordinary reader by the brief statement that Eliezer "arose and went to Mesopotamia;" but what befell him by the way we know not. The narrative leaps the whole distance, and so must we, with the simple assurance that the Lord God of Israel led him by the right way.

Every phrase of the eleventh verse contains an allusion to matters Oriental. Arrived at "the city of Nahor, he made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at the time of evening, even the time that women go out to draw water."[1] He made the camels kneel—a mode of expression taken from actual life. The action is literally kneeling; not stooping, sitting, or lying down on the side like a horse, but kneeling on his knees; and this the camel is taught to do from his youth. The place is said to have been by a well of water, and this well was outside the city. In the East, where wells are scarce, and water indispensable, the existence of a well or fountain determines the site of the village. The people build near it, but prefer to have it without the town, to avoid the noise, dust, and confusion always occurring at it, and especially if the place is on the public highway. It is around the fountain that the thirsty traveller and the wearied caravan assemble; and if you have become separated from your own company before arriving at a town, you need only inquire for the fountain, and there you will find them or hear of them. It was perfectly natural, therefore, for Eliezer to halt at the well. The time was evening; but it is further stated that it was when the women go forth to draw water. True to life again. At that hour the peasant returns home from his

[1] Gen. xxiv. 11.

labor, and the women are busy preparing the evening meal, which is to be ready at sunset. Cool fresh water is then demanded, and of course there is a great concourse around the well. But why limit it to the women? Simply because such is the fact. About great cities men often carry water, both on donkeys and on their own backs, but in the country, amongst the unsophisticated natives, women only go to the well or the fountain; and often, when travelling, have I seen long files of them going and returning with their pitchers, at "the time when women go out to draw water."

Again: the description of Rebekah, the account she gives of herself, and the whole dialogue with Eliezer, agree admirably with Oriental customs. Even the statement as to the manner of carrying her pitcher, or rather jar, is exact—on her shoulder. The Egyptian and the negro carry on the head, the Syrian on the shoulder or the hip. She went down to the well; and nearly all fountains in the East are in wadies, and many of them have steps down to the water. Eliezer asks water to drink; she hastens and lets down the pitcher on her hand. How often have I had this act performed for myself, when travelling in this thirsty land! Rebekah's address to the "servant," "Drink, my lord," will be given to you in the exact idiom by the first Rebekah you ask water from. But I have never found any young woman so generous as this fair daughter of Bethuel. She drew for all his camels, and for nothing, while I have often found it difficult to get my horse watered, even for money. Rebekah emptied her pitcher into the trough—always found about wells, and frequently made of stone. The jewels, also, for the face, forehead, and arms, are still as popular amongst the same class of people as they were in the days of Abraham. Not only are the head, neck, and arms adorned with a profusion of gold and silver rings, chains, and other ornaments, but rings are suspended on the face, from the side of the nose, etc.

Laban's address to Eliezer, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord," is still in general use. I have myself been welcomed in set phrases even more complimentary and sacred. The camels, as appears from the thirty-second verse, were included in the invitation, and were apparently brought into the house; and I have often slept in the same room with these peaceful animals, in company with their

owner and all his family. Straw and provender were given to them—that is, tibn—and some kind of pulse or grain. Water to wash the feet of the wearied travellers was of course provided. So, also, the mode of negotiating the marriage contract, the presenting of gifts, etc., are all in perfect accordance with modern usages. The parents manage the whole affair; often, however, with the advice of the eldest son and heir, as Laban was in this case. If the father be dead, the eldest son takes his place, and assumes his authority in the disposal of his sisters. Presents are absolutely essential in betrothals. They are given with much ceremony before witnesses, and the articles presented are described in a written document, so that, if the match be broken off, the bridegroom can obtain them back again, or their value, and something more, as a compensation for the injury.

Finally, the behavior of Rebekah, when about to meet Isaac, was such as modern etiquette requires. It is customary for both men and women, when an emeer or great personage is approaching, to alight some time before he comes up with them. Women frequently refuse to ride in the presence of men, and when a company of them are to pass through a town, they often dismount and walk. It was, no doubt, a point of etiquette for Rebekah to stop, descend from her camel, and cover herself with a veil in the presence of her future husband. In a word, this Biblical narrative is so natural to one familiar with the East, that the entire scene seems to be an affair in which he has himself been but recently an actor.

We learn from the history of David that "the men of Judah came" here, and anointed him "king over the house of Judah," and that he reigned "in Hebron seven years and six months,"[1] and they were probably the happiest in his eventful career. From the top of the lofty hill above the city he must have often looked with emotions of deepest thankfulness eastwards and southwards over the scenes of his exile life, when, houseless and homeless,

> He fled for life, and scarce by flight did save it.

Poet as he was, he would inevitably give expression to those emotions in his lyrical compositions; and here we find, I suppose,

[1] 2 Sam. ii. 4, 11.

the subjective basis of many beautiful ideas and expressive similitudes in his devout psalms.

It is probable that he composed some of them with the distinct object of commemorating those events. The historic notice prefixed to the eighteenth Psalm implies that it was intended thus to bring to remembrance his many deliverances from enemies and dangers. It is entitled "A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: and he said, I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."[1] In this joyful and thankful strain he continues throughout the whole fifty verses of this magnificent lyric.

This Psalm could scarcely have been written before David's residence and reign in Hebron, for not till then had he been delivered from all his enemies, and especially from Saul. He could recall many a rugged ravine and high rock where the Lord had delivered him in his utmost need. What more natural than that he should call the Lord his rock, his fortress, his high tower, his horn of salvation, as he does once and again, and repeats it half a dozen times in loving remembrance in a single verse? Beyond most countries this southern part of Palestine abounds in such places of refuge. The traveller finds the remains of ancient towers on many a crag and mountain-top, and they necessarily imply times of misrule and lawless violence when they were needed. In such an age it was that David, fleeing for dear life from the mad jealousy of Saul, found safety and rest in them; and his devout spirit led him to recognize in these natural fortresses the watchful care of Him who was greater than rock and high tower. These were to him expressive symbols of God himself—that God in whom he trusted in every hour of peril. It is in no way surprising, therefore, to hear him sing so often and so sweetly of God, his rock, his high tower, his horn of salvation. The Christian Church has most appropriately transferred these terms and titles of Jehovah into her devotional hymnology and

[1] Psa. xviii. 1, 2.

spiritual literature. Toplady, it would seem, has beautifully blended several of them in his familiar hymn,

> Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in thee.

Such names and titles of God were naturally suggested to the Hebrew poets and people by their condition and experience in this southern part of Palestine, where they were perpetually environed by vigilant and cruel enemies. Every man had to be a soldier, armed at all points, and always on his guard—a condition in itself providential and eminently symbolical. We could safely predict that the spiritual language of a people thus situated would abound in figures and phrases derived from such surroundings; and just as certain would have been their total absence had the Hebrews dwelt in some peaceful paradise, where no enemies lurked and war was unknown.

The phrase "horn of salvation" is a singular epithet to apply to Jehovah, especially in immediate association with rocks and high towers.

If left to our own ingenuity to discover the natural basis for this divine title, the connection in which it is used in the eighteenth Psalm would lead one to find it in the conical hills which form a conspicuous feature in the scenery of Southern Palestine. Such hills are even now called horns by the natives of the country, as, for example, Kŭrun Hattîn—the horns of Hattîn—the Mount of Beatitudes, where King David's greater Son proclaimed the divine law of his eternal kingdom; and many of them bear a sufficiently close resemblance to the thick, short horns of Bashan's famous bulls to justify the comparison, especially when they are crowned with lofty watch-towers. Nor is the analogy between these hill-horns and the protecting providence of God at all irreverent. God is the true horn of salvation, ever ready to give warning at the approach of danger, as the watchman on the high tower, and afford instant protection from it by opening wide the portals, and admitting to the place of safety within the fortress.

May not the title horn of salvation have been suggested by the raised corners of ancient altars? Temples, and more especially the

altars, were regarded as sanctuaries which might not be violated; and the greatest criminal, if he could but lay hold of the horns of the altar, was safe, at least for the time. There are many striking examples of this fact in Biblical history.

True; nor need the remark be limited to the Hebrews, since such sanctuaries were common in most heathen countries. To the devout Hebrew, however, Jehovah was the sole reliable refuge; and these external objects were only significant symbols, pointing to him. Among the Hebrews temples and altars were not the only things which symbolized this attribute of the divine character. The "cities of refuge" taught the same truth in the most striking and emphatic manner.

This reminds me of the fact that Hebron was one of those cities in ancient times. Has it anything of that character at present, or do the modern Orientals still observe the command, "Appoint out for you cities of refuge?"[1]

There are occasions when a place of safety "from the avenger of blood" is greatly needed, not only in this neighborhood but in other parts of the country. The gates of many cities in this land have time and again been sought with eagerness, "that the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither."[2] In lawless times such cities of refuge would be of avail even to the hapless traveller beset by thieves or robbers. This was forcibly brought home to my personal consciousness when passing through Northern Palestine many years ago. We were traversing the long plain of el Mŭkhna, south of Nâblus, the site of another of those cities of refuge, when a party of Bedawîn made their appearance in swift pursuit of us. It was, therefore, with a feeling of intense relief that we reached the opening between Gerizim and Ebal, and fled on to the gate of Nâblus. Our party presented a striking resemblance to the spectacle of the "man-slayer" flying to that same city from the sword of the avenger, in hot pursuit behind him. Nor has our experience been the sole instance in modern times when the gate of Nâblus has afforded the only available refuge from the spear and the sword of lawless Arabs who infest that neighborhood.

The purpose for which cities of refuge were established was a

[1] Josh. xx. 2, 7.

[2] Josh. xx. 3.

humane one, both "for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them."[1] Moses found the law of revenge—the lex talionis—so deeply rooted in the feelings and habits of the people that it was impossible to eradicate it altogether. He could only check its execution, and mitigate the horrors of such a cruel and barbarous social law. Comparing the accounts of its institution in Deuteronomy iv. 41–43, and xix. 1–10, with Numbers xxxv. 9–29, it is evident that there was no intention to screen a real murderer from being put to death, but merely to secure a fair judicial investigation—a result accomplished nowadays by the common prison. If convicted of murder, the guilty person must have been handed over to the avenger of blood, who was himself to be the executioner. This was probably the best thing that could be done in that age, and under the circumstances, though it had a tendency to cherish a blood-thirsty, vindictive spirit amongst the people.

It seems to me that but scant justice was accorded to the innocent by this institution. Even after he was acquitted of all blame, he was to be strictly confined within the area of the walls of the city of refuge; and if he ventured outside of it, the avenger might lawfully slay him, though he had not committed any crime whatever.

Some of the specifications as to the innocent shedder of blood are very surprising, and imply a savage ferocity in the people which we can scarcely comprehend. In the nineteenth chapter of Deuteronomy we read that "whoso killeth his neighbor ignorantly, whom he hated not in time past; as when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbor to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbor, that he die; he shall flee unto one of those cities, and live."[2] The utmost favor secured to this perfectly innocent person was to be shut up in the city of refuge, if he could but get there, with the certainty that, if he ventured beyond the gate, the avenger might slay him at once. Cruel and unjust as was this custom, it has prevailed substantially amongst many tribes in these Oriental lands from remote ages down

[1] Josh. xx. 9. [2] Deut. xix. 4, 5.

to this day; and although there are now no cities of refuge, still no man-slayer is safe outside the city gate; and nothing, I believe, will effectually eradicate this custom of revenge but the prevalence of a pure Christianity.

If the Talmudical tradition be true that the roads to these cities of refuge were kept in good repair, and guide-posts, with the word "Refuge" written in large characters upon them, were erected at any place where hesitation or mistake was possible, we should have all the conditions necessary to render the application of the name, Refuge to God, eminently natural and appropriate.

It is possible that this particular title of Jehovah was first heard in the agonizing cry of some fainting fugitive, in despair of reaching such a sanctuary.

The natives of this land, Christian and Moslem, to this day, apply names and titles, not only to their patron saint or venerated wely but to God himself, according as their stress or circumstance suggests; and we may safely conclude that without these, or similar conditions, this name would never have been applied to God—not, at least, with the same delightful and blessed significance. Existing and co-operating with them, this title would surely become most precious to the hearts of God's people.

The transference from the visible symbol to the spiritual truth symbolized requires no elaborate illustration. The convicted sinner is the "man-slayer," and Jehovah-Jesus the only available refuge:

Dear Refuge of my weary soul!
On thee, when sorrows rise—
On thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies.

X.

HEBRON.

El Haram, Machpelah.—Authenticity of the Sepulchre.—Exterior of the Mosk.—Benjamin of Tudela's Description.—Pierotti's Description of el Haram.—Dean Stanley's Account of his Visit to Machpelah.—Houses in Hebron.—Population of Hebron.—Cities of Refuge not situated in Conspicuous Positions.—Pools in the Valley of Hebron.—Murderers of Ish-bosheth hanged over the Lower Pool.—Description of the Pools.—Vineyards of Hebron.—Grapes of Eshcol.—Appearance of the Vineyards Peculiar and Striking.—Vine Stocks.—Methods of Cultivating the Vine.—Dibs, Juice of the Grape.—Houses and Rude Towers in the Vineyards.—Watchmen, and Biblical Allusions to them.—Watchmen on the Walls of the City.—Watchmen standing upon the Mountains guarding the Vineyards.—Cry of the Watchmen in Concert.—Abraham's Oak.—Relics and Mementoes manufactured from the Wood of Sacred Trees.—Fruit-trees in the Valley of Mamre.—The Pomegranate.—Several Kinds of Pomegranates.—Description of the Fruit and Flower.—Biblical Allusions to the Pomegranate.—Outlook from the Mountain north of Hebron.—Region east and south of Hebron abounding in Biblical Sites.—Tell 'Arâd, Arad.—Keilah.—Zif, Ziph.—Maon and Carmel.—David, Nabal, Abigail.—Site of Ancient Carmel.—Fountain and Reservoir.—Ruins of Carmel.—Castle.—Church.—Masada.—Wolcott and Tipping.—Josephus's Description of Masada.—Masada besieged by Flavius Silva.—Self-immolation of the Siccarii.—Canon Tristram's Description of the Ruins of Masada.—Pillar of Salt.—Jebel Usdum.—South-western Shore of the Dead Sea.—No Outlet to the Dead Sea.—Beer-sheba.—The Wells.—Dr. Robinson's Description.—Biblical Allusions to Beer-sheba.—The Seat of a Bishopric.—Ruins of Beer-sheba.—Arabic Inscription.—Tell es Seba', Sheba.—El Milh, Moladah.—Edh Dhoherîyeh, Debir.—Othniel, Caleb, Achsah.—Seil ed Dilbeh, the Upper Springs and the Nether Springs.—Ancient Remains at edh Dhoherîyeh.—Signification of the Names of Debir.

April 21st.

I HAVE been out examining el Haram as closely as the insolent keepers would allow, and it seems to bear marks of a higher antiquity than anything I have yet seen in Palestine. Do you suppose that it encloses the identical cave, and the graves of the six ancestors of the Hebrew nation?

I have no doubt of it, and therefore I regard it as the most interesting of all sepulchres on the face of the earth. Other places

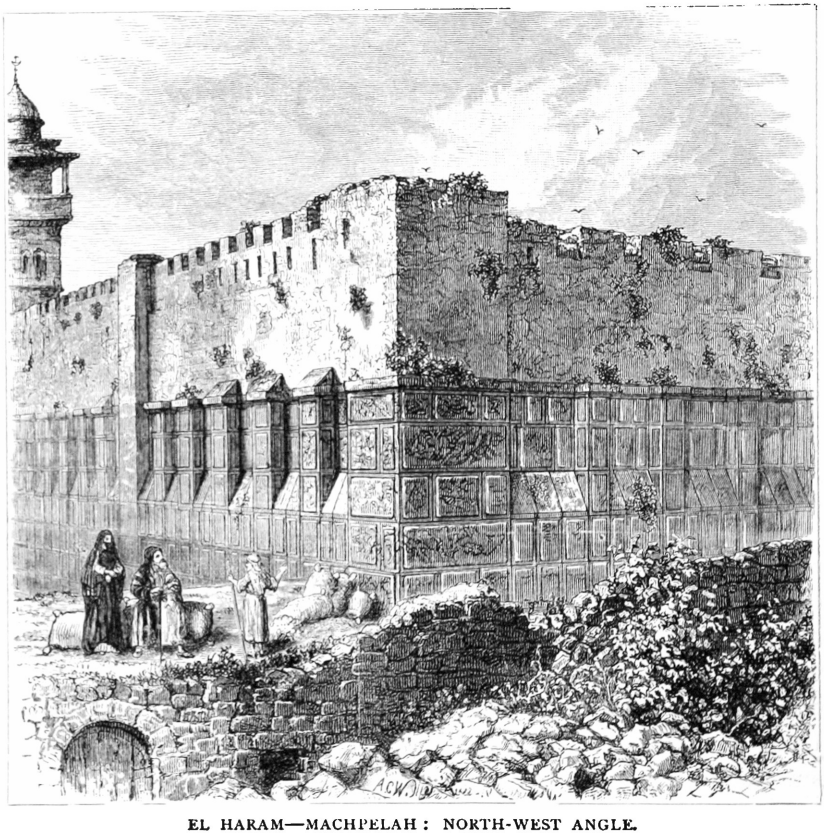
might be equally sacred and precious could we be sure of their identity—the manger at Bethlehem, Calvary in Jerusalem, or the last resting-place of Adam, or Noah, or Moses, for example; but doubt and obscurity, absolute and impenetrable, rest on all such sites. Here, however, there is no room for scepticism. The identical cave in which the patriarchs and their wives were reverently gathered "unto their people," one after another, by their children, remains. Such a cave will endure as long as the "everlasting hills" of which it is a part; and from that day to this it has so come to pass, in the providence of God, that no nation or people has had possession of Machpelah who would have been disposed to disturb, or allow others to do so, the ashes of the illustrious dead within it.

There is something in mere mystery that strangely fascinates the imagination. I was conscious of an intense desire to penetrate the hidden recesses of Machpelah which the fanatical custodians of the Haram so jealously conceal.

Something more and better than idle curiosity justifies one's indignation at being officiously driven away from the sepulchres of the patriarchs; but as there is as yet no remedy for the indignity, we must be contented with what information can be gathered from various sources, however unsatisfactory this may be.

Like other travellers, I have been permitted to examine, at a respectful distance, the outside walls of el Haram, and, like them, can give my own impressions. The position on the declivity of the hill, with the town below, to the south and west of it, adds greatly to the imposing appearance of the edifice. The external walls are, doubtless, very ancient—probably of Jewish workmanship—though I cannot think that they date back to Solomon, or to any time anterior to the captivity. The stones are large, but with a shallow bevel; and the face is worked off smooth, like some parts of the wall about the area of the Temple at Jerusalem. The square pilasters, without capitals or any well-defined cornice, are a feature quite unique, and mark it off from any other edifice I have examined. There are sixteen of these on each side, and eight on the ends. The height of the wall, including the more recent additions of the Saracens, is at least fifty feet, perhaps more. Dr. Robinson gives two hundred feet for the length, one hundred and fifty for the

breadth, and sixty for the height. The rock on the hill-side above the cave is intensely hard breccia; and portions of it are of a pale red color, like that from which crosses and other curiosities are made in Bethlehem for the pilgrims. I succeeded, in 1838, in breaking off specimens of it, though not without danger of a mob. The cave is beneath this stratum of hard rock. Until recently



EL HARAM—MACHPELAH: NORTH-WEST ANGLE.

we had no good description of the interior of the edifice. I have studied Aly Bey's drawings, and his very unsatisfactory account explanatory of them, but am unable to say whether or not they confirm the particulars gleaned from other sources. Benjamin of Tudela, upon whom I have wished on many occasions to be able to rely, and never more than in this instance, says that the real

sepulchres are not shown to ordinary visitors; but if a rich Jew arrives, the keepers open an iron door which has been there ever since the days of our forefathers, that is, of the patriarchs themselves. Through this they enter, descend into a first cave, which is empty, traverse a second, which is also empty, and reach a third, which contains six sepulchres—those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah—one opposite the other. He says, also, that all these sepulchres have inscriptions, the letters being engraved, that of Abraham thus: "This is the sepulchre of our father Abraham, upon whom be peace!" and so of all the rest. But Benjamin wrote so carelessly in other instances, where we can follow him, as to shake our faith when we cannot. The day is not far off when this and every other sacred locality will be thrown open to the inspection of all who wish to know the truth in regard to them. Several parties have gained admittance to this venerable edifice. Dean Stanley, in company with the Prince of Wales; the celebrated architect, Mr. Fergusson; Lord Bute and party, and also M. Pierotti, visited it. From their various accounts we gather much additional information of special interest.

The mosk occupies the highest part of the town, and is sunk in the mountain on the east and north sides. Its external wall forms a parallelogram, the two sides of which, on the north and south, have a length, according to M. Pierotti, of one hundred and ninety-eight and a half feet, the east and west sides one hundred and thirteen and a half feet. The height of the ancient wall is forty-eight feet. The longer sides contain sixteen flat buttresses, and the shorter eight. These have a regular breadth of four feet, while on the four angles they have a double breadth. The projection of all from the flat surface of the wall is sixteen inches. They have no capitals, but support a highly relieved cornice. The whole of this enclosure wall consists of regular courses of magnificent blocks perfectly squared and slightly rusticated, and all admirably joined together. In the lower courses the stones are much larger than in the upper. Dr. Wilson mentions one thirty-eight feet long and three feet four inches high: others are sixteen feet long and five feet high. As the courses rise higher, the dimensions of the blocks diminish, and it is remarkable that each course recedes

slightly from the course below it. The wall itself is six and a half feet thick, and appears to be formed of two stones.

Ascending the stairs skirting the west and part of the south side, we reach the gate in the ancient south wall. The inside of the edifice is divided into two parts, namely, the mosk on the west, and a court on the south, where are placed sarcophagi, to represent the monuments of the patriarchs who, it is said, lie beneath. The mosk is supposed to be the church which the Crusaders built. It is divided into three naves of equal length, which end against the west wall of the enclosure. Two piers on each side separate the central from the lateral naves. These latter are thirty feet in height, the former forty-eight feet. The piers are adorned with columns of Palestine breccia, having varied bases and Corinthian capitals. The columns are in two tiers in the central naves. The arches, supported by the piers, are very pointed. The pavement of the mosk rests on the rock, as has been ascertained from a place in the court. According to Pierotti, the true entrance to the patriarch's tomb is to be seen close to the western wall of the enclosure, and near the north-west corner: "It is guarded by a very thick iron railing, and I was not allowed to go near it. I observed that the Mussulmans themselves did not go very near it. In the court opposite the entrance-gate of the mosk there is an opening through which I was allowed to go down for three steps, and I was able to ascertain, by sight and touch, that the rock exists there, and to conclude it to be about five feet thick.

"From the short observation I could make during my brief descent, as also from the consideration of the east wall of the mosk, and the little information I extracted from the chief santon, who jealously guards the sanctuary, I consider that a part of the grotto exists under the mosk, and the other part is under the court, but at a lower level than that lying under the mosk. This latter must be separated from the former by a vertical stratum of rock, which contains an opening, as I conclude from two reasons: first, because the east wall, being entirely solid and massive, requires a good foundation; secondly, because the petitions which the Mussulmans present to the santon to be transmitted to the patriarchs are thrown, some through one opening, some through the other, according to the

place of the patriarch's grave to whom they are directed; and the santon goes down by the way I went, whence I suppose that on that side there is a vestibule, and that the tombs may be found below it. I explained my conjectures to the santon himself after leaving the mosk, and he showed himself very much surprised at the time, and told the pasha afterwards that I knew more about it than the Turks themselves. The fact is, that even the pasha who governs the province has no right to penetrate into the sacred enclosure, where, according to the Moslem legend, the patriarchs are living, and only condescend to receive the petitions addressed to them by mortals. As long as Palestine, or rather the Ottoman Empire, is in the way of progress, I can certify that no one, however powerful he may be, will manage to go down below the three steps I descended in the sanctuary of Hebron. I must not omit to say that the Jews who dwell in Hebron, or visit it, are allowed to kiss and touch a piece of the sacred rock close to the north-west corner, which they can reach through a small aperture. To accomplish this operation they are obliged to lay flat on the ground, because the aperture is on the ground-level."

Dean Stanley thus describes what he saw: "In the recess on the right is the shrine of Abraham, on the left that of Sarah, each guarded by silver gates. The shrine of Sarah we were requested not to enter, as being that of a woman." The shrine of Abraham, after a momentary hesitation, and with a prayer offered to the patriarch for permission to enter, was thrown open. "The chamber is cased in marble. The tomb consists of a coffin-like structure, built up of plastered stone or marble, and hung with three carpets, green embroidered with gold. They are said to have been presented by Muhammed II., Selim I., and the late Sultan, 'Abd el Mejîd. Within the area of the mosk or church were shown the tombs of Isaac and Rebekah. They are placed under separate chapels, and the gates are grated, not with silver but iron bars. To Rebekah's tomb the same decorous rule of the exclusion of male visitors naturally applied as in the case of Sarah's. But on requesting to see the tomb of Isaac, we were entreated not to enter; and on asking, with some surprise, why an objection which had been conceded for Abraham should be raised in the case of his far less

eminent son, were answered that the difference lay in the character of the two patriarchs. Abraham was full of loving-kindness; he had withstood even the resolution of God against Sodom and Gomorrah; he was goodness itself, and would overlook any affront. But Isaac was proverbially jealous, and it was exceedingly dangerous to exasperate him. When Ibrahim Pasha, as conqueror of Palestine, had endeavored to enter, he had been driven out by Isaac, and fell back as if thunderstruck.

"The shrines of Jacob and Leah were shown in recesses similar to those of Abraham and Sarah, but in a separate cloister, opposite the entrance of the mosk. Against Leah's tomb, as seen through the iron grate, two green banners reclined, the origin and meaning of which were unknown." The gates of Jacob's tomb were opened without difficulty, but it calls for no special remark. With these descriptions we must for the present rest content. Of course, the tombs seen were not the real ones, which are in the cave beneath them.

It is strange that the Biblical notices of Hebron end with the rebellion of Absalom against his father, as you will find by turning to the fifteenth chapter of 2 Samuel. The cave of Machpelah is not again mentioned after the burial of Jacob in it. None of the sacred writers appear to have visited it, nor did our Lord or any of his disciples; and yet it is evident, from Josephus, Jerome, and other authors, that it was known and believed to be the last resting-place of the patriarchs. There is, perhaps, more in this reticence than mere accident, and it teaches most emphatically that the idolatrous reverence for such sites, and for the relics of departed saints, was wholly unknown amongst pious Hebrews. There is no evidence that access to the cave was prohibited before the introduction of Muhammedan fanaticism, and yet Machpelah never became a place of superstitious pilgrimage.

Hebron appears to be well built. The houses are generally two stories high, and have flattened domes, such as we saw at Jaffa, Ramleh, Gaza, and other places in the south part of this country.

The same as at Jerusalem, and the reason is that timber is too scarce and dear to admit of flat roofs. I presume it was thus in the days of Solomon, for he had to bring the beams and boards for

the Temple from Lebanon; and much of what is now used in these cities is brought from thence by sea to Jaffa, and afterwards carried on camels. Hence the rooms are nearly all vaulted, even when there is a second story. The roofs, however, may be made flat by raising the exterior walls and filling in until level with the top of the arch. This is done on the convents and other massive buildings, by which a fine promenade is secured.

What may be the population of Hebron?

I estimated it at between seven or eight thousand in 1838, and it remains about what it was then. Some think this estimate too low, while others speak of only five thousand; but that is certainly below the truth. There are some seven hundred Jews; all the rest are Moslems, and of a most bigoted and insolent character. There are but few Christians either in the town or district.

Hebron furnishes another refutation of the ancient fable about the cities of refuge, that they were situated in conspicuous positions. Here it lies in this long valley, with no prospect in any direction except towards the south-east, and even that is not very extensive.

If it was of any importance, we might refer to a tradition as old, at least, as Benjamin of Tudela, that the original city did actually occupy the north-western hill. I do not, however, believe it; there is nothing there to support it; and many things in and about the present town seem to settle its claims to be one of the oldest cities in the world, and on an immovable basis.

We will devote this forenoon to ride around the suburbs of Hebron, and I promise you a pleasant excursion through the vineyards to Abraham's famous oak. We may as well stop on our way, and examine the larger of the two pools in the vale below the town.

In 2 Samuel iv. 12 it is stated that by the command of King David they slew the murderers of Ish-bosheth, "and cut off their hands and their feet, and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron." Do you suppose that these pools are as ancient as the time of David?

I see no reason to doubt that both this one in the bottom of the valley, between our tents and the town, and also the smaller one farther up the wady, date back to those days; and as it was not *a*

pool, but "*the* pool in Hebron," it is quite possible that we have here in this lower pool the precise spot indicated. Such structures thus located in the bottom of a valley, and strongly built, may last for centuries; and if at any time repairs were needed, they could be made without disturbing the original site. I regard the larger



LOWER POOL OF HEBRON.

pool especially as amongst the surest evidences that the town of Hebron has always occupied substantially its present position. It is one hundred and thirty-three feet square, and about twenty-two feet deep. The upper one is eighty-five by fifty-five, and nineteen feet deep. They are rarely full of water, though I have seen them

overflowing in a very rainy season. Stone steps lead down to the water from the corners, and men, women, and children are seen constantly descending and ascending, with tall jars on their shoulders, or large skin bottles upon their backs. The town seems now to depend upon them, though the water is none of the purest; and there are fountains at no great distance up the valley. Aqueducts now broken, but which must have been in use at a comparatively recent period, imply that the inhabitants did not always draw their drinking-water, at least, from these open, common, and somewhat filthy reservoirs.

Before we pass on, notice how sharply defined against the sky are the two minarets of el Haram, and how much of the town is seen to advantage from this pool.

These vineyards of Hebron through which we are now riding are certainly the most extensive I have seen in the country, and no one can fail of being reminded by them of that extraordinary "branch with one cluster of grapes" which the spies carried "between two upon a staff;" for the valley of Hebron is the supposed place from whence they bore this proof of the fertility of the Promised Land.[1]

I have been here in the season of grapes, and, though the clusters are larger than in most other localities, and very long, yet I have never seen any so heavy as to require to be borne between two upon a staff; still the tradition locating "the brook of Eshcol" in this valley is very ancient. In regard to the vineyards of Hebron, all travellers speak with admiration of them, and justly; for they are extensive, well kept, and very productive. They cover the valley and the sloping hill-sides for a long distance to the west and north-west of the town, and are the main support of a large portion of the population.

The appearance of these vineyards is quite peculiar and very striking: a veritable wilderness of hills, rocks, rough garden-walls, bushes, small trees, and an infinite number of crooked sticks inclined in every possible attitude except the perpendicular.

These last will look very different when their deformities are clothed, in autumn, with green vines from which hang countless

[1] Numb. xiii. 22, 23.

clusters of purple grapes, and the rocks and hill-sides will then be festooned with trailing branches. The vine-stocks are made to grow thick and stout for five or six feet by cutting them off at that height. Some vines are strong enough to stand alone, but of



VINEYARDS OF HEBRON.

course, when weighted with clusters like the one carried away by the spies, they require to be sustained by such ungraceful stakes and rustic props. There are many kinds of grapes in this country, and the methods of cultivating the vine are various. Some are

prevented from growing large and long, and kept so pruned as to need little or no support; others are allowed to run ad libitum upon the ground, as on the pretty plain of Ijon, in Northern Palestine, and elsewhere. Vines are often trained upon trees; and their long drooping clusters of many colors—white, yellow, pink, purple, and black—are truly beautiful.

When I first came to this land, and for many years after, grapes were very abundant and surprisingly cheap. I could get a donkey-load for a dollar; but the grape-blight came, and caused many people to cut down their vineyards, and of course the fruit became less abundant and much dearer. We shall find the best varieties of grapes at Damascus and on the sunny slopes of Lebanon, and better than those I have never tasted, either in the Old World or the New.

As the Moslems do not make wine, how do they dispose of the grapes which such vast vineyards must produce?

Those not sold in the market are dried into raisins, or the juice is expressed and boiled down into dibs, a sirup of grapes resembling molasses—an article frequently mentioned in the Bible, as is supposed, under the kindred name of debash, but which in some places is translated honey, and in others manna. It is not a beverage at all, but forms a part of the ordinary food of the present inhabitants of Hebron, and throughout the land from Dan to Beersheba, and farther still.

These houses and rude towers in the vineyards are for the vine-dressers, I suppose?

The houses are for the families of the owners; and should you come this way in September or October, you will find the city partially deserted, and these gardens crowded with grape-gatherers of every age and sex. Nearly the whole population then live abroad, each under his own vine and fig-tree. Most of them sleep beneath these vine-covered arbors, and the houses are for the safe-keeping of their utensils and the raisins while they are out gathering grapes.

Those towers stationed around on commanding points are for the watchmen, and they are already there, keeping a keen eye upon the entire range of vineyards. One of them is coming towards us from his tower, to see who we are, and what may be our business

out here amongst these gardens. We will take him as our guide to the oak; for, although it is in full view, there are many turns yet to be made in our tortuous path before we can reach it. These watchmen are very celebrated characters in the Bible, and figure largely both in prose and poetry. Isaiah has a beautiful reference to them in the fifty-second chapter of his prophecies: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."[1]

Do you believe that the watchmen here mentioned were set over the fields and vineyards? I had supposed that the prophet refers in that passage to the military sentinels in time of danger.

Doubtless the reference is in many places to sentinels stationed upon lofty mountains or upon the fortifications of the city. Thus, in the sixty-second chapter and sixth verse, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night;" and again, in the seventh verse of the fifty-second chapter—"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" If you conceive of Zion as a city defended by walls and towers and guarded by soldiers, the illustration is natural and striking, particularly in time of war. Then, as I myself have seen at Jerusalem, these watchmen are multiplied, and so stationed that every yard of the wall falls under their surveillance, and thus they literally see eye to eye. They never remit their watchfulness, nor do they keep silence, especially at night. When danger is apprehended they are obliged to call to one another and to respond every few minutes. The guard on the lookout at the Tower of David, for instance, lifts up his voice in a long call, the one next south of him takes up the note and repeats it, and thus it runs quite around the circuit of the walls. At Sidon the custom-house guards stationed around the city were formerly required to keep one another awake and alert in the same way, particularly when there was danger of smuggling.

There are, however, other scenes in this country, in regions

[1] Isa. lii. 8.

abounding in vines and vineyards, which appear to me to correspond better with the drapery of the passage from Isaiah, especially those of the eighth verse of the fifty-second chapter. Zion, or the Church of God, is frequently described under the similitude of a garden or vineyard. Her watchmen are not on walls, but stand upon the mountains, and the scene is rural, not mural. It breathes of the country, not of the city. To understand this joyous song of the prophet, one needs to go forth to the fields at the time of the vintage. The vineyards are generally planted on the sides of mountains, often climbing, by successive terraces, as they do here, quite to the summit. Being far from the village, and without fence or hedge, they must be carefully guarded, and the stoutest and boldest young men are selected for watchmen. These take their stations on the highest part of the mountain which they have to guard, and are so arranged that the eye of one surveys the entire series of vineyards up to the point where the eye of the other reaches. Thus eye meets eye, and every part is brought under constant surveillance. "They shall lift up the voice." This is very natural and effective. When an animal or thief appears, or any other cause of alarm occurs, the watchman who observes it lifts up a prolonged cry at the very top of his voice, and is immediately responded to by his fellows at the other stations; and the attention of all being aroused, it is his duty whose part is threatened with injury to attend to the case at once. Thus it will be with Zion in the happy days foreshadowed by this prophecy. The watchmen being sufficient in number, rightly located, all intent upon their work of watching, and ready to afford each other information of danger and assistance in repelling it—then will Zion dwell safely. Wild beasts may threaten to break in and devour, and robbers may prowl about, but the system of defence will be perfect, and the watchmen "scorn surprise."

This explanation coincides best with the seventh verse of the fifty-second chapter: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." These watchmen, standing upon the very pinnacle of the mountain, have a striking appearance, particularly when seen from below their stand-point, afar off, at a great elevation, in their picturesque cos-

tume, their outline sharply drawn upon the clear blue sky beyond; they seem in fancy's eye like aerial beings hovering in mid heaven over their peaceful charge. The feet are mentioned, perhaps, because they are seen standing, as if alert and prompt to fulfil the duties of their office. They do, in fact, stand, not sit or lounge; and the same idea is implied in the fifth verse of the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah: "Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks." Good shepherds do not sit down in careless neglect of their charge, and I have often been reminded of this promise to Israel when looking at the shepherd standing out in bold relief upon some towering cliff, from which he could see every member of his flock.

It is only on rare occasions that one now sees all the circumstances to which we have alluded combined in the same scene, and the best illustration is found in elevated and retired parts of Lebanon, during the months of September and October. When passing through vineyards thus situated and thus guarded on that goodly mountain, I have been suddenly startled by a long, loud note of warning, swelling up the steep cliffs of the mountains, and responded to by others before and behind, "singing together" in concert, and waking the echoes that sleep in the wadies and amongst the ragged rocks; then one of the watchmen, leaving his lofty station, would descend to meet me with hands laden with the best clusters for my acceptance, and this, too, without money and without price. Courteously accompanying me to the end of the vineyards, he would there dismiss me with a graceful bow, and the prayer of peace on his lips. If, however, one attempts to take without permission, these watchmen are required to resist even unto death, and in the execution of their office they are extremely bold and resolute. I have known many serious and some fatal rencounters of this kind.

Here we are at the famous Oak of Abraham, and a moment's inspection will show to one acquainted with such matters that it can have no connection with that patriarch, or, indeed, with any one else who lived more than a thousand years ago. We have oaks in Lebanon larger than this, and every way more striking and majestic. It is a fine old sindiâneh—evergreen oak—however, twenty-six feet in girth at the ground, and its thick branches extend over an area ninety-three feet in diameter. Some six feet from the

ground the tree forks into three great arms, which again divide as they ascend into innumerable branches. The location is beautiful, near the head of Wady Sebta, and about two miles north-west of the city. The ground beneath it is covered with grass, green and clean, and many a picnic is achieved by the Jews of Hebron upon the soft sward that is allowed to grow beneath this noble oak of their father Abraham.



BALÛTAT ES SEBTA.—ABRAHAM'S OAK.

Many years ago a large branch of this old tree was broken off by the wind. The wood, carried to Jerusalem, was manufactured into beads, crosses, rulers, paper-cutters, book-covers, and other fancy articles, which were eagerly purchased by pilgrims and travellers. No such branch has fallen since, yet the supply of curi-

osities has ever been equal to the demand; and you can now obtain any number of these mementoes, with the necessary label to certify that the wood of which they are made has been taken from this venerable oak.

Other wood, even more sacred, is said to have been endowed with a similar power of miraculous reproduction to satisfy the desire of the credulous for such precious relics.

True enough; and we may well pity the foibles or the follies of those who attach any value to such trifles; and yet, when we reach Jerusalem, you will be found amongst the purchasers of articles made, probably, from this oak-tree and from the olive wood of Mount Olivet. The mild deception will be excused, condoned by the beauty of the work, and the pleasure of having pretty reminders of your visit to the Holy City and the Holy Land.

In returning to our camp we can extend the ride for an hour through the northern part of the vineyards, and thereby become better acquainted with the varied productions of this fertile vale of Mamre. Besides grapes, the most important fruits of Hebron are figs and olives; but apples, pears, plums, apricots, quinces, and pomegranates also flourish when properly cultivated.

Pomegranates, I remember, were amongst the fruits which the spies carried back with them from this very valley; and hence it is fair to infer that they must have abounded here at that early period.[1]

As they do still; and some of the bushes we have passed during our ride might even be called trees by way of courtesy, but in reality these large and delicious "grained apples" grow on a stout thorny bush. There are several varieties, both sweet and sour, in this country. In Jebâ'a, and elsewhere on Lebanon, there is a kind perfectly black on the outside. The general color, however, is a dull russet-green, inclining to yellow, and some even have a blush of red spread over a part of their surface. The outside rind is thin but tough, and the bitter juice of it stains everything it touches with an undefined but indelible blue, and hence it is largely used by the native dyers of cotton fabrics. The average size is about that of the orange, but some of those from Jaffa and Sidon

[1] Numb. xiii. 23.

are twice as large. Within, the grains are arranged in longitudinal compartments as compactly as corn on the cob, and closely resemble those of the pale red corn, except that they are nearly transparent and very beautiful. There are several varieties of pomegranates—some sweet, others decidedly acid, and a dish filled with the grains shelled out of either or both is a very handsome ornament on the table. The fruit is as agreeable to the taste as it is pleasant to the eye. They ripen about the middle of October, and, suspended in the store-room or kitchen, are kept in good condition, though partially dried, through the winter.

The flower of the pomegranate is bell or tulip shaped, and is of a beautiful orange-red, deepening into crimson on some bushes. There is a variety of which the flower is very large and double; but this bears no fruit, and is cultivated merely for its brilliant blossoms, which are put forth profusely during the whole summer.



ER RUMMÂN—THE POMEGRANATE.

This fruit was greatly esteemed in ancient times, and is mentioned by Moses as one of the excellencies of the Promised Land.[1] By divine command, he was to make pomegranates on the hem of the ephod, "a golden bell [the blossom] and a pomegranate" alternately round about the hem of the robe;[2] and they were reproduced in the Temple upon the net-work that covered the chapiters on the top of "Jachin and Boaz," those noble pillars of brass—two hundred pomegranates, in rows, round about.[3] Solomon, of course, adorns his Song of Songs with allusions to this beautiful and pleasant fruit; and,

[1] Deut. viii. 8. [2] Exod. xxviii. 34. [3] 1 Kings vii. 15–22.

while admiring it, we may follow him through his gardens and vineyards, and enter more readily into the gorgeous chamber of imagery where that poetic monarch delighted to dwell, and drink of spiced wine of the juice of his pomegranate.[1]

There is now no such thing as pomegranate wine made in the country; but the juice of the sour variety is used, in the absence of lemon, for much the same purposes, both in cooking and in the making of a grateful beverage as a substitute for lemonade.

The pomegranate-tree is mentioned in Joel i. 12 amongst the more valuable fruit-trees of the land, the failure of which had caused joy to wither away from the sons of men. And when Haggai was commissioned to promise special divine blessings upon Israel, the pomegranate is enumerated with the fruit-bearing trees of the country whose productiveness was to be restored, in view of the diligence of the people in rebuilding the temple.[2]

April 21st. Evening.

Our ride through the vineyards and orchards of Hebron has given me a far higher appreciation of the beauty and fertility of this oldest of cities; and the outlook which we had, on the way back from the mountain north of Hebron, over the vast regions to the east and south, where David spent most of his exile life, made me long to extend our pilgrimage in that direction, and thence to the southern shore of the Dead Sea, and around to Beer-sheba.

But once in that wild and romantic territory, it would have been difficult to fix a limit to our wanderings. That entire section of the country abounds in Biblical sites beyond almost any other. They are now mostly deserted, it is true; still, they bear names either the same or so like them as to leave no doubt of their identity with those mentioned in the fifteenth, nineteenth, and twenty-first chapters of Joshua. The list is long and suggestive. There is Ziph, and Hachilah, and Juttah, and Anab, and Socoh, and Eshtemoa, and Carmel, and Maon, and Anim, and Jattir, and Arad, and Beer-sheba, and many others which modern research is identifying with Biblical sites in rapid succession.

Tell 'Arâd, no doubt, perpetuates the name of that ancient city

[1] Song iv. 13; vi. 11; vii. 12; viii. 2.

[2] Hag. ii. 17–19.

whose king made war against Israel while they were in the wilderness of Kadesh, "and took some of them prisoners." This so enraged the people that they pronounced against his cities the doom or vow of extermination; and having captured and destroyed Zephath, they changed its name to Hormah—"utter destruction"—as appears from Numbers xxi. 1–3, compared with the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the first chapter of Judges. Hormah was at first given to Judah, but was subsequently occupied by the Simeonites.[1] It was several times destroyed and rebuilt, and was certainly inhabited by Hebrews at the time of David, for he sent presents "unto the elders which were in Hormah," after the death of Saul.[2]

A few miles north of Tell 'Arâd are Carmel and Maon, close together, and in the same neighborhood is Ziph—which three places are now called Kurmul, Ma'în, and Zîf—and Keilah, hill and cliff and valley, all three, but without the wood in which David with his six hundred men were concealed when King Saul sought his life every day in the wilderness of Ziph.[3] In fact, the whole region has been forever immortalized by the daring exploits and marvellous escapes of David, which read like an antique romance rather than sacred history.

I have often wondered whether David, when king, remembered the ungrateful Keilites. He had saved Keilah from the Philistines, and yet its inhabitants were ready to deliver him into the hands of Saul.[4]

Though David was magnanimous beyond example in that age, still the temptation to visit their ingratitude and treachery with well-merited severity must have been strong. But the conduct of the Ziphites was still worse. They did not wait for Saul to seek David, but went up to him "to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us in strongholds in the wood, in the hill of Hachilah, which is on the south of Jeshimon? Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand. And Saul said, Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me."[5] And their infamous treachery was nearly successful, for

[1] Josh. xv. 30; 1 Chron. iv. 30.
[2] 1 Sam. xxx. 30.
[3] 1 Sam. xxiii. 13–15.
[4] 1 Sam. xxiii. 1–13.
[5] 1 Sam. xxiii. 19–21.

Saul hastened to Ziph with his army, and David and his men were in the utmost peril, as you will find if you read the details in the latter part of the twenty-third chapter of 1 Samuel.

Well might David call the name of the rock in the wilderness of Maon, from whence Saul was summoned from pursuing after him by the news that the Philistines had invaded the land, Sela-ham-mahlekoth, the rock of escapes.[1]

The whole of the twenty-fifth chapter of 1 Samuel is taken up with the account of David's connection with Maon and Carmel, which threatened at the first to be bloody and tragical, but ended happily. This part of his career reads like an Oriental romance.

Nabal, a wealthy man of Maon, "had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel." Such occasions being proverbially given to open-hearted hospitality, David, who had protected Nabal's shepherds and flocks in the wilderness, sent ten of his young men to salute Nabal, and say to him: "Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favor in thine eyes; for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David. And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased."

Every part of this courteous address is in admirable keeping with Oriental etiquette, and perfect in all its detail in this very region at the present day. But "Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?

"So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

[1] 1 Sam. xxiii. 25–28.

"And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff."

But divine Providence interposed to prevent David from shedding innocent blood. One of the young men of Nabal's household told Abigail, the wife of Nabal, saying, "Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them. But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.

"Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two [skin] bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal. And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them. And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid." And then follows that inimitable plea of Abigail, until David was more than pacified. He "received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and accepted thy person.

"And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. And it came to

pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, that he died. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife."

The whole conduct and appeal of Abigail show her to have been a woman of extraordinary prudence and decision. Her entire address was admirably adapted to pacify David's indignation, and nothing could have gratified him more than the trite allusion to the most brilliant exploit of his life: "The souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling." The reference to the sling could only recall to the mind of David his victorious conflict with Goliath of Gath, the champion of the Philistines. Abigail "was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance;" and we are rather disappointed to find her name drop away from subsequent history, with merely the incidental mention of her son Daniel in the chronological list of David's many children.[1] In 2 Samuel iii. 3 the name of Abigail's first son is Chileab, which suggests the possibility that she may have had more than one son.

It is pleasant to know that Abigail's original home was in a beautiful and well-watered valley. A place so rich in interesting Biblical incident merits a fuller description than you have given of other sites in that region.

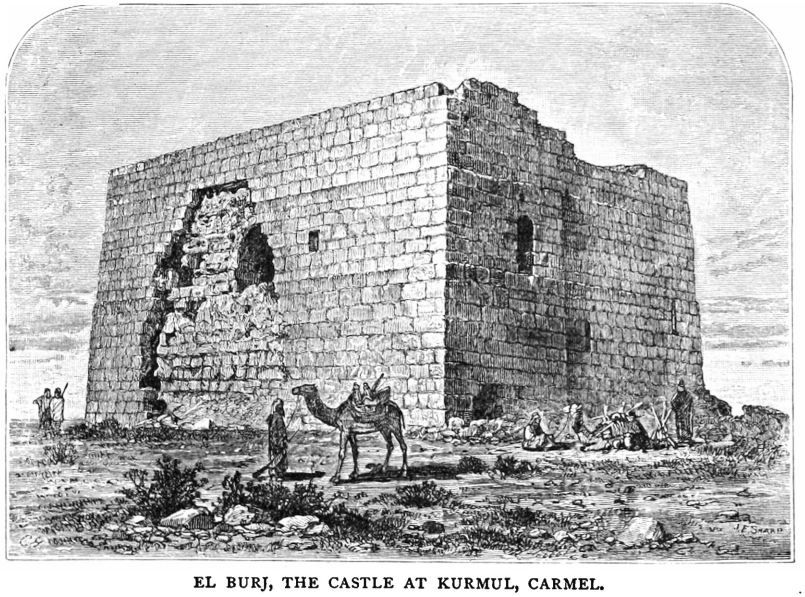
The remains of Carmel, now called Kurmul, are extensive, and widely dispersed on both sides of the wady, the head of which forms a semicircular amphitheatre shut in by rocks. From thence the wady extends towards the south-east, and then trends round to the north-east. The surrounding country is broken and barren, with numerous deep defiles and impracticable gorges, which descend precipitously to the Dead Sea. The bottom of the amphitheatre is a beautiful grass-plot, with an artificial reservoir in the middle, over a hundred and fifteen feet long and about seventy-five feet broad. The water comes from a spring in the rocks to the north-west, and is conducted to the reservoir from an excavated chamber by an underground channel.

This reservoir may be of any age—is certainly ancient—and it is quite possible that Nabal selected this place for his sheep-shearing;

[1] 1 Sam. xxv. 3; 1 Chron. iii. 1.

for even in autumn it is full of water, and surrounded at all times by herds of sheep, goats, cows, and camels; and the fact that he had three thousand sheep and one thousand goats has nothing extravagant or incredible about it. Lieutenant Conder states that in the neighboring village of Yŭtta—the Juttah of the Old Testament—the inhabitants boast of possessing seventeen thousand sheep alone, besides goats, cows, camels, asses, and good horses. Nabal's possessions, therefore, only corroborate the Biblical statement that "the man was very great."

At the ruins there are indications and traces of wine-presses, which lead to the belief that the culture of the grape was extensive in that region, and this also confirms the Biblical story in regard to Nabal's feast and his subsequent drunkenness. The main ruins are on the level ground west of the amphitheatre; and, as Dr. Robinson remarks, they consist chiefly of the foundations and broken walls of dwellings and other edifices scattered in every direction, and thrown together in mournful confusion and desolation.



EL BURJ, THE CASTLE AT KURMUL, CARMEL.

The most remarkable ruin is el Burj, the castle, standing on a swell of the ground in the midst of the village. It is quadrangular

in form, measuring sixty-two feet by forty-two feet, and facing the cardinal points, and the height is about thirty feet. The external wall is evidently ancient, and has on the northern and western sides a sloping bulwark, like the citadel in Jerusalem. The stones are bevelled, though not so large as those of the tower of Hippicus; yet the architecture is of the same kind, leaving little room for doubt that it is the work of Herod or of the Romans. The walls are nearly ten feet thick, and the interior was formerly divided into a lower and upper story, but the upper arch is gone.

About a quarter of a mile south of the castle are the remains of a church, whose foundations are one hundred and fifty-six feet long and about fifty feet broad. This edifice appears to have been divided into two parts. The easternmost of these — the proper church, with the remains of columns—was sixty-nine feet in length by forty-six feet broad; the western part, eighty-seven feet long by forty-eight feet broad. These remains, together with those other churches around Kurmul, are, of course, of the Christian era.

It is strange that such a valley, with a noble fountain, a blessing so rare and valuable in this dry and thirsty land, should be left to a few tribes of tent-dwelling Arabs.

To the south-east of Carmel, overhanging the Dead Sea, is the extraordinary ridge terminating in the tremendous rock-cliff of Masada, now called by the Arabs Sebbeh. The Rev. Dr. Wolcott, my former associate in Beirût, was the first in modern times to identify and describe this wonderful rock-castle; and the most accurate pictures of it that I have seen were drawn by his travelling-companion, Mr. Tipping, and appeared in Traill's translation of Josephus. Their visit was made in the winter of 1842, and since then many travellers have been there, including some of Lieutenant Lynch's Exploring Expedition, and members of other similar expeditions. Of those who have attempted to describe this ancient and renowned rock-fortress of Masada, no one, except, perhaps, M. de Saulcy, has been so smitten with the spirit of exaggeration as Josephus. You can read his account in the eighth chapter of the seventh book of his Wars. He thus speaks of the approach to it along the path "called the Serpent, as resembling that animal in its narrowness and its perpetual windings, for it is broken off at the prominent preci-



SEBBEH—MASADA.

pices of the rock, and returns frequently into itself, and, lengthening again by little and little, hath much ado to proceed forwards, and he that would walk along it must first go on one leg and then on the other; and there is also nothing but destruction in case your foot slip, for on each side there is a vastly deep chasm and precipice, sufficient to quell the courage of everybody by the terror it infuses into the mind."

The historian informs us that Jonathan the high-priest first of all built a fortress on this cliff, and called it Masada; but the great wall around the entire summit, seven furlongs in length, was the work of Herod, who, besides the fortifications, and an immense cistern hewn in the rock for a full supply of water, erected a palace there, with columns, and porticoes, and baths, and sumptuous apartments, and laid up an immense store of arms and provisions, and spent vast sums in preparing it to be a last retreat for himself in case of need. He, however, died elsewhere, and had no occasion for such a stronghold; but not long before the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, a band of robbers, whom Josephus calls Siccarii, seized upon it, and dared to set at defiance the conquerors of the world; and upon its hard and blackened summit was enacted the very last scene in the tragedy of Israel's final overthrow.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, Flavius Silva at length laid siege to Masada, and built a wall to hem in the besieged, which can still be traced quite around the rock, and also the remains of the Roman camp; and when the place was subdued by famine, and the defences were stormed, the people, unable to escape, and maddened by the speech of Eleazar their chief, "embraced their wives, took their children in their arms, and gave the longest parting kisses," and with bitter tears plunged their dripping daggers to their hearts, and laid them all dead in one ghastly funeral pile. They then chose ten men by lot to slay all the rest, and every one laid himself down by his wife and children, and, with his arms around their lifeless bodies, offered his neck to the sword of the executioner. This bloody butchery accomplished, one of the ten killed all the rest, and finally himself. Thus perished nine hundred and sixty men, women, and children—the last great sacrifice on the altar of divine retribution—and only two women and five children survived to tell the

tale. Such tragedies are far more than mere incidents in man's general history. They are the voice of the Almighty One, setting the seal of truth divine to a thousand admonitions and prophetic warnings scattered everywhere through his Holy Word, and, thus regarded, there is no stronger evidence for the divine origin of the Bible than the seven books of the Jewish Wars by Josephus.

Canon Tristram, who visited Masada in 1864, describes the site of the strongest part of the fortification as a flat platform on the summit of a peak, isolated by tremendous chasms on all sides, of an oblong shape, and widest at the southern extremity. The total length of the platform is about six hundred paces, and its width from east to west about two hundred paces. The entire elevation above the level of the Dead Sea, Canon Tristram found to be twenty-two hundred feet, which is much higher than the estimates given by other travellers, or the usual computation, which gives it at from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred feet. The cliffs overhanging the Dead Sea are from one thousand to fifteen hundred feet, and almost perpendicular; and yet, as is well known to residents in this country, so clear is the atmosphere, and so extraordinary its power of conveying sound, that one is able to carry on a conversation with those below.

Besides the main fortifications on the top of the cliff there were several towers erected on projecting rocks, and the whole of the platform was enclosed by a wall along the edge of the precipice, and affording no foothold on the outside of it. "In the centre of the plateau stands an isolated building. It measures eighteen yards from north to south, and sixteen from east to west. The west porch is five yards square, the nave ten and a half yards, with a semicircular apsis, and a circular arched light at each end, and is all very neatly plastered with fine cement and flat pebbles, and fragments of pottery in mosaic patterns. Did we not know that Masada had no history after its capture by Silva, this chapel would certainly have been set down as a Crusading ruin."

Towards the south end of the plateau are many shapeless ruins that probably indicate the site of Herod's palace, which Josephus describes in his usual style of exaggeration. Beyond this, southwards, the platform terminates in a tremendous chasm.

In order to secure a supply of water during the rainy season, numerous cisterns were constructed in various places. These are now all broken, and can hold no water, as all visitors will find, to their sorrow and discomfort, who do not carry thither with them a supply of this indispensable article. The entire locality now presents a scene of indescribable desolation, and all who visit it are impressed with the mournful though magnificent outlook over the Dead Sea, and the picturesque, wild, and worn mountains of Moab and Edom beyond.

Was it not somewhere along the south-western shore of the Dead Sea, and not far from Masada, that travellers and authors, both ancient and modern, have sought for the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was transformed?

A few miles south of Masada is Jebel Usdum — mountain of Sodom — or Khasum Usdum, a word signifying "cartilage of the nose;" a ridge very uneven and rugged, varying from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet in height, the main body being a solid mass of rock-salt. Canon Tristram walked three miles along its eastern face, but could find no practicable place to ascend to the top; and long before him Dr. Robinson traversed the whole length of the ridge, a distance of five miles, with no better success, the very stones beneath his feet being wholly of salt, the débris of large lumps and masses broken off from above. It is of a greenish color, resembling that of a shallow sea; and portions of the salt cliff are constantly splitting off, leaving perpendicular faces; and where this is not the case, the débris at the base is too loose to permit of any climbing. There is no regular plateau on the top, but, instead, a forest of little peaks, with deep fissures between, forming impassable gulfs from one to the other.

Is it not probable that some one of these pinnacles has been taken for the pillar of salt?

It is quite possible. Josephus asserts that the pillar existed in his day, and that he himself had seen it; and some of the Christian fathers repeat the story, either on the authority of Josephus or upon that of current tradition. Even modern travellers have fancied that they discovered the peak which represented that miraculous pillar. I suspect the existence of this astonishing ridge of

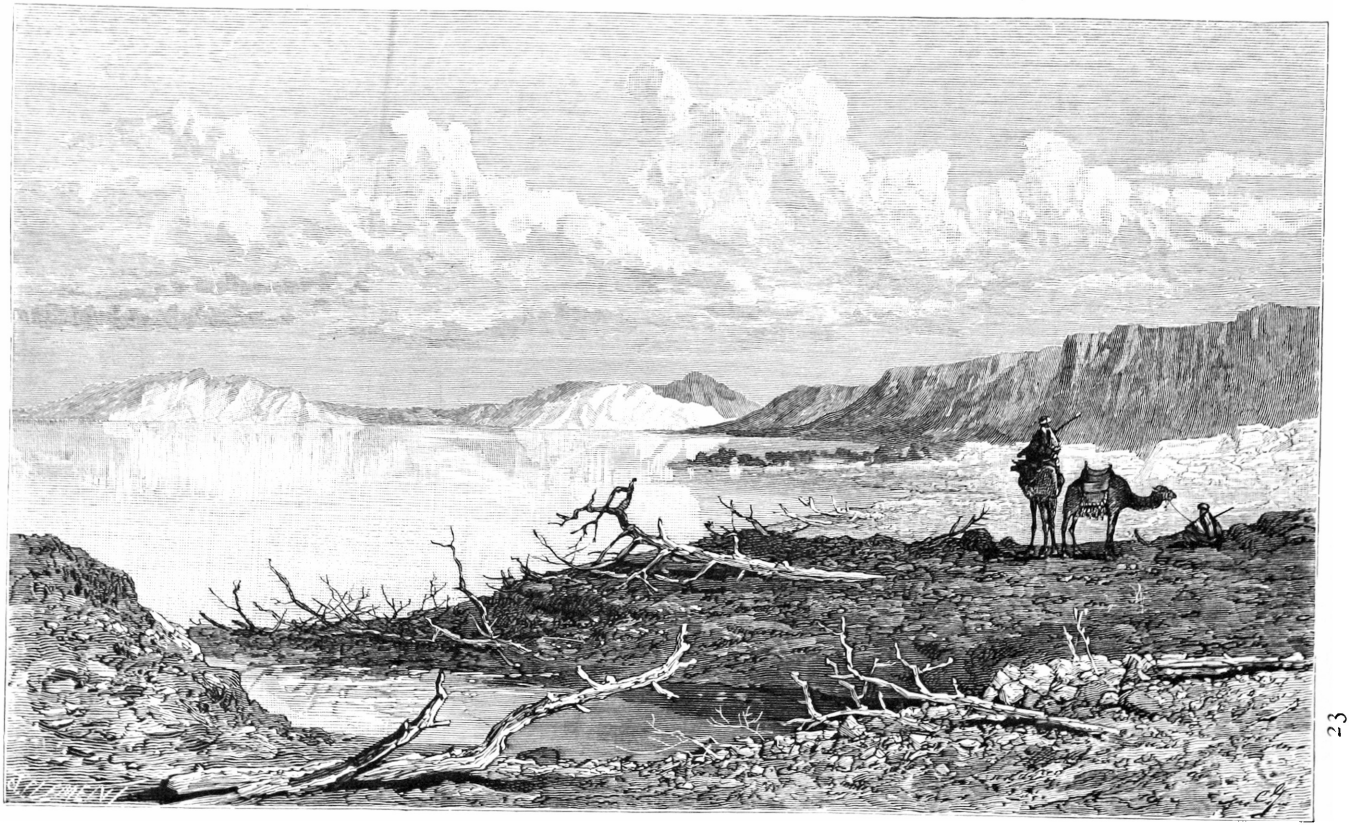
rock-salt, with its pinnacles, some of which are over one hundred feet high, has led to the conclusion, well-nigh universal in all past ages, that Sodom, with her associate cities, was situated in this neighborhood, and probably upon a plain between Jebel Usdum and the Lessan, or peninsula, on the eastern shore of the sea.

The intervening sea between those two points is very shallow, and late in autumn, when the water is low, it has been forded from the Lessan to the foot of Jebel Usdum. It is supposed that the plain, on which the doomed cities stood, was submerged by the catastrophe, and that their ruins lie buried beneath the bitter waters of the Dead Sea. There is no intimation in the sacred narrative of such a submergence, and the entire theory in regard to the locality of those cities is probably a mistake.

We will now pass from this subject, and away from this region, with the remark that the south-western shore of the Dead Sea is a perfectly flat plain, called es Sebkha, composed of salt, mud, and quicksand, which no traveller can traverse with safety, at least according to the experience and testimony of M. de Saulcy, who came near being engulfed in its treacherous depths.

In former times it was the common opinion that the Jordan once flowed through Wady 'Araba from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of 'Akabah; but this theory has now been entirely abandoned, and for reasons which are perfectly conclusive. Dr. Robinson and Dr. Smith passed up the 'Araba, and found that it rose many hundred feet, far south of the Dead Sea, before it began to incline towards the Gulf of 'Akabah; and scientific measurements subsequently demonstrated the surprising fact that the surface of the Dead Sea is about thirteen hundred feet lower than the level of the sea; and hence, if a communication could be opened between the gulf of 'Akabah and the Jordan, instead of that river flowing thither, the water of the gulf would pour into the Dead Sea, filling up the whole valley of the Jordan to the north end of the Lake of Tiberias, and burying the city of Tiberias itself with its desolating flood more than six hundred feet deep. There is no evidence that the Dead Sea has ever had any outlet, but has always been essentially what it is now, an inland lake of intensely bitter water.

After Jebel Usdum and the Dead Sea, the place of greatest



JEBEL USDUM—MOUNTAIN OF SODOM.

interest must be Beer-sheba, to the south of Hebron, and the proverbial limit, in that direction, of the Promised Land.

Dr. Robinson, with his companion, Dr. Smith, were the first modern travellers who visited and described the place where Abraham resided for some time, and where he "planted a grove, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God."[1] On their way from Sinai to Jerusalem—April 12th, 1838—they came to "Wady es Seba', a wide watercourse, or bed of a torrent, running west-south-west, towards Wady es Sŭny. Upon its northern side, close upon the bank, are two deep wells, still called Bîr es Seba', the ancient Beer-sheba," the Well of Seven, or the Well of the Oath.[2] They had entered the borders of Palestine! the Promised Land!

Beer-sheba, or Bîr es Seba', is situated in lat. 31° 4′, and long. 34° 47′ east from Greenwich, and is about thirty miles south, a little west, from Hebron. Of the two wells, "the larger one is twelve and a half feet in diameter and forty-four and a half feet to the surface of the water, sixteen feet of which, at the bottom, is excavated in the solid rock. The other well lies fifty-five rods west-south-west, and is five feet in diameter and forty-two feet deep. The water in both is pure and sweet, and in great abundance. Both wells are surrounded with drinking-troughs of stone for camels and flocks, such as were, doubtless, used of old for the flocks which fed on the adjacent hills. The curb-stones were deeply worn by the friction of the ropes in drawing up water by the hand."

Dr. Robinson epitomizes the history of Beer-sheba in the following brief reflections: "Here, then, is the place where the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob often dwelt! Here Abraham dug, perhaps, this very well, and journeyed from hence with Isaac to Mount Moriah, to offer him up there in sacrifice. From this place Jacob fled to Padan-Aram after acquiring the birthright and blessing belonging to his brother; and here, too, he sacrificed to the Lord on setting off to meet his son Joseph in Egypt. Here Samuel made his sons judges; and from here Elijah wandered out into the southern desert, and sat under a shrub of Retem, just as our Arabs sat down under it every day and every night. Here was

[1] Gen. xxi. 33. [2] Gen. xxi. 28–32.

the border of Palestine proper, which extended from Dan to Beer-sheba.[1] Over these swelling hills the flocks of the patriarchs once roved by thousands."[2]

The grove which Abraham planted at Beer-sheba, and all other trees, have long since disappeared from this deserted site; and it is now, and for centuries has been, utterly forsaken, except by the Bedawîn, who continue to water their flocks and herds at the wells.

Beer-sheba was first assigned to Judah, and afterwards to Simeon.[3] In later times it appears to have been the seat of idolatrous worship,[4] but it was one of the places to which the Jews returned after the Captivity.[5] "The name does not occur in the New Testament, nor is it referred to as then existing by any writer earlier than Eusebius and Jerome in the fourth century. They describe it as a large village with a Roman garrison." It was the seat of a bishopric in the early Christian times, before the country was conquered by the Moslems. Travellers who visited the place in the fourteenth century speak of churches still standing, although the place itself was then uninhabited; and for the succeeding five centuries it remained unvisited and unknown.

Traces of the ancient village are found on the low hills to the north of the wells, the ruins of former habitations, but scarcely one stone remains upon another. The houses appear not to have stood compactly, but scattered over several little hills; and they were built mostly of round stones and mud, and were, no doubt, perishable structures. Many travellers have recently visited this once celebrated site, but they have added little to our general information. Lieutenant Conder encamped at the main well, and believes that he discovered an Arabic inscription on a stone, "built in evidently its proper place, in the fourteenth course of the masonry on the south side," with the date of A.H. 505, which "would place the date of the present masonry in the twelfth century, thus sadly contradicting the romantic fancy that the great furrows may have been first traced by the ropes of the followers of the first patriarch, who

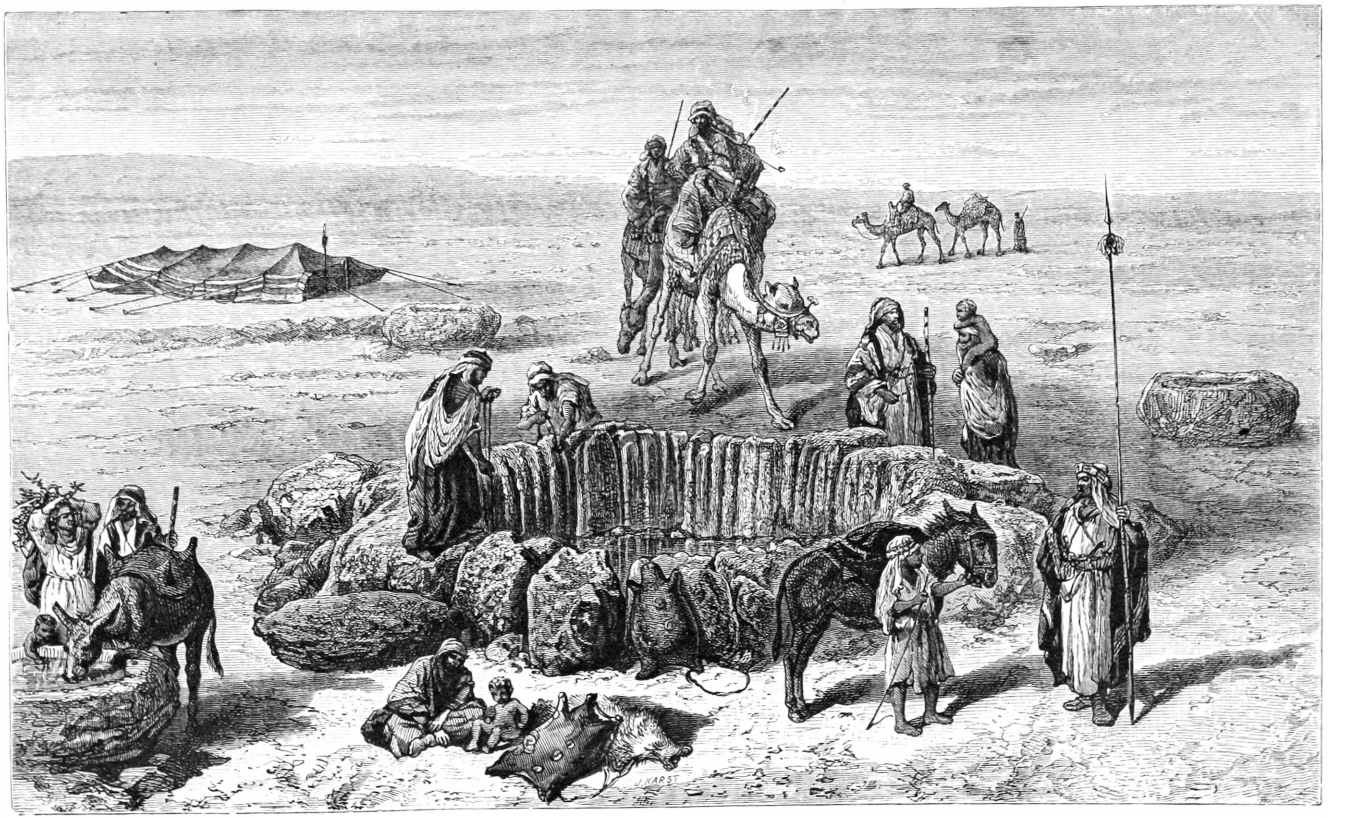
[1] Gen. xxi. 31; xxii. 19; xxvi. 23; xxviii. 10; xlvi. 1; 1 Sam. viii. 2; 1 Kings xix. 3; Judg. xx. 1; 2 Sam. xvii. 11.

[2] Rob. Res. vol. i. pp. 203–205.

[3] Josh. xv. 28; xix. 2.

[4] Amos v. 5; viii. 14.

[5] Neh. xi. 27, 30.



BÎR ES SEBA'—BEER-SHEBA.

dug the well." Even if this were so, the well itself may be as old as the times of the patriarchs; and the curb-stones, with their deep indentations, now found around the mouth of the well, may be equally ancient.

Lieutenant Conder describes a large double tell, called "Tell es Seba', within two miles of Beer-sheba, on the direct line to Moladah," and suggests that this tell marks the site of the Sheba mentioned in Joshua xix. 2, in connection with Beer-sheba and Moladah; and this may well be correct, for the latter place has been identified with Tell el Milh, where are wells and extensive ruins.

Half-way between Hebron and Beer-sheba is edh Dhoherîyeh, a village recently identified by Lieutenant Conder with Debir, the city conquered by Joshua, probably from the Anakims, for it was one of the places held by them, and after he had taken Hebron. "And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir; and fought against it: and he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that were therein; he left none remaining."[1] From this account, it appears that Debir was at no great distance from Hebron, and probably to the south and west of it; and this is corroborated by the narrative of its subsequent capture by "Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, who took it;" and Caleb "gave him Achsah his daughter to wife." And she said to her father, "Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land [an arid or dry land]; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs."[2] This narrative is repeated verbatim in the first chapter of Judges.[3]

Lieutenant Conder locates Debir at edh Dhoherîyeh, and the identification is quite satisfactory in all respects, with the single exception of the considerable distance of the "springs of water"—the chief point in the request of Achsah. He finds "the upper springs and the nether springs" in "Seil ed Dilbeh, a secluded valley to the west of Yutta, and only six and a half miles north of edh Dhoherîyeh."

There are no less than fourteen springs in this beautiful valley, "and these so copious that the various translations—pools of wa-

[1] Josh. x. 36–39. [2] Josh. xv. 13–19. [3] Judg. i. 9–15.

ter, fountains for irrigation, or well-watered places—are all fully accounted for." These fountains meet all the demands of the narrative, so far as water and the supply of it is concerned; but six and a half miles is a long distance from Debir, and one is rather surprised at the large extent of territory that must have been included in the dowry of Achsah, if the springs she coveted were those in the valley of Seil ed Dilbeh. This may not be a fatal objection to the identification; and as the region about edh Dhoherîyeh is certainly a dry land, and there are no other copious fountains in the vicinity, we may, at least for the present, adopt that place as the site of Debir.

Edh Dhoherîyeh has no remarkable ruins about it. "It is a rude assemblage of stone hovels, many of which are half underground, and others broken down. A castle or fortress, called el Hŭsn, once stood here;" but rock-cut tombs, caves, and traces of old foundations establish its claims to be the site of an ancient place.

The original name of Debir was Kirjath-sepher, the city of books;[1] but in Joshua xv. 49 it is called Kirjath-sannah, the city of the palm. The former name has led some critics to the conclusion that it was celebrated amongst the Canaanites as a seat of learning of the Amalekites, or for the manufacture of books. Debir stood in the hill-country, and was assigned to Judah, but was afterwards allotted to the Levites.[2] The Arabic name, edh Dhoherîyeh, may be translated ridge or promontory, and hence this signification corresponds with its position, and also with the meaning of the word.

[1] Josh. xv. 15; Judg. i. 11.

[2] Josh. xv. 49; xxi. 15; 1 Chron. vi. 58.

XI.

HEBRON TO SANTA SABA.

Manufacture of Glass at Hebron.—Bishop Arculf.—Tomb of Adam.—St. Willibald.—Castle of Abraham.—Aner, Eshcol, Mamre.—Khurbet en Nŭsârah.—House of Abraham.—Well, Bîr el Khŭlîl.—Er Râmeh, Market-place for Slaves.—Terebinth at Abraham's House.—Visit of the Angels to Abraham.—Hospitality of Abraham.—Sarah.—Departure of the Angels.—Abraham's Intercession in Behalf of Sodom.—Caravan of Donkeys to purchase Corn.—Migration of Jacob and his Sons to Egypt.—Increase of the Hebrews prior to the Exodus.—Hebron to the Dead Sea.—'Ain Jidy, En-gedi.—Hazezon-tamar.—Expedition of Chedorlaomer.—Lot taken Captive.—Rescue of Lot by Abraham.—Pursuit of David by Saul to En-gedi.—Sheepcotes.—Beden, Wild Goats.—Isaac's Savory Meat.—Invasion of the Moabites and Ammonites.—Divine Interposition in Behalf of Judah.—Cliff of Ziz.—Wady Bereikût, Valley of Berachah.—Fountain of 'Ain Jidy.—'Osher, Apple of Sodom.—Palm-groves and Vineyards of En-gedi.—Camphire, Henneh.—Remains of Ancient En-gedi.—'Ain edh Dhirweh.—Beit Sûr, Beth-zur.—Defeat of Lysias by Judas at Bethsura.—Site of Ancient Beth-zur at 'Ain edh Dhirweh.—Scene of the Baptism of the Eunuch by Philip.—Halhûl, Halhul.—Kufîn.—Jedûr, Gedor.—Beit Nŭsîb, Nezib.—Beit Sakârieh, Beth Zacharia.—Battle between Antiochus Eupator and Judas.—Destruction of Public Highways.—Wady Biyâr.—Ruined Aqueduct.—Kŭl'at el Burak.—Solomon's Pools.—Supply of Water for the Pools.—Maundrell's Description of the Fountain.—Ruined Aqueducts.—Aqueduct to Jerusalem.—Lower Pool.—Solomon's Vineyards, Gardens, and Pools of Water.—Alpine Swift.—Tragical Incident.—El Khŭdr, St. George.—Tekû'a, Tekoa.—Amos.—The Wise Woman, David, Joab.—Mughâret Khŭreitûn, Cave of Adullam.—Tyrwhitt Drake's Description of the Cave.—David's Connection with the Cave of Adullam.—City of Adullam.—Jebel el Fureidîs.—Beth-haccerem.—Herodium.—Burial-place of Herod the Great.—Frank Mountain.—Jebel el Fureidîs to Mar Saba.—Santa Saba.—Ŭrtâs, Etam.

April 22d.

THERE are two or more places in the vicinity which we can visit this morning on the way from this city of refuge to the pools of Solomon, where we will rest and take our lunch.

I have seen it stated in books of travel that the glass ornaments and trinkets sold to pilgrims in Jerusalem are made here.

This is one of two manufactures peculiar to Hebron, the other being the making of leathern water-bottles. I was not a little

amused on my first visit to the curious little factory here. Having not long before examined one of those in America, I entered this with no little curiosity; but what a contrast! In an old rickety room were three or four small furnaces of earth, all aglow with the melted matter. The workmen were then making rings and bracelets, to supply the Jerusalem market. The process was extremely simple: an iron rod was thrust into the melted mass, to the end of which a small portion adhered. This was rapidly twisted and pressed into a circular shape merely by the dexterous use of a long blade like that of a knife. It was a second time thrust into the furnace, and, when sufficiently softened, was stretched to the proper size by the aid of another iron rod. The various colors seen in the bracelets, rings, seals, beads, and other like trinkets are blended with the general mass in the furnace, not laid on afterwards; and while some are nearly black, others are quite white, and others variegated with all the intermediate shades. I did not see them make lamps, although they manufacture large quantities for this country and for Egypt.

If we are to put any confidence in the brief descriptions given by early travellers in this country, Hebron must have dwindled to an inconsiderable village during the first centuries of our era.

The account given by Bishop Arculf, who visited Hebron in the seventh century, is the earliest we have, and he found merely the ruins of the ancient city. But he says there were some ill-built villages and hamlets scattered over the plain, and inhabited by a multitude of people; and to the east was a double cave, looking towards Mamre, where are the tombs of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Adam, the first man. Contrary to the usual custom, these graves were placed with the feet to the south and the heads to the north, and enclosed by a square low wall. Each of the tombs was covered with a single stone, worked somewhat in the form of a church, and of a light color, for those of the three patriarchs which were together. The tomb of Adam, which was of meaner workmanship, lay not far from them, at the farthest extremity to the north.

I believe Arculf was utterly misled, and that the graves shown to him were merely ordinary Moslem tombs, like those below our

camping-ground. He "also saw poorer and smaller monuments of the three women, Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah, who were here buried in the earth." Now, it is quite impossible that these were the real graves; and therefore the bishop, if he was actually here, must have been purposely deceived. He says the hill of Mamre is a mile to the south-west of the monuments, and covered with grass and flowers, with a flat plain at the summit, on the north side of which was a church, in which is still seen, rooted in the ground, the stump of the oak of Mamre, called also the oak of Abraham, because under it he received the angels, and that St. Jerome mentions the oak as having stood there from the beginning of the world. Not very likely; and the entire description leads one to doubt whether Arculf was ever at Hebron at all.

Bishop Arculf finds Adam's tomb at Hebron: was that a common tradition in former times?

The earliest Christian travellers and commentators were much perplexed about the location. Many, perhaps the most, maintained that Adam was buried on Calvary, or in Golgotha, at Jerusalem, while not a few held that his sepulchre was in the cave of Machpelah. Sir John Maundeville, who came this way in 1322, not only says that Adam was buried in Hebron, but also that he was fashioned and made there. His account is an inextricable tangle of historical anachronisms and topographical impossibilities, with which you can amuse yourself any leisure hour you may have.

St. Willibald travelled through Palestine in the early part of the eighth century, and visited Hebron, did he not?

His account is still more meagre than that of Arculf. All he says is that, after visiting St. Zecharias, he went to the castle of Aframia, where the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, repose, with their wives, and thence he returned to Jerusalem. By the castle of Aframia is meant the castle of Abraham, for at that time the Haram over the cave of Machpelah was thus called, and this became the popular name of Hebron itself, just as now the Moslems call it el Khŭlîl—the Friend—in remembrance of Abraham, the Friend of God.

Well, I am thankful to have seen el Khŭlîl under happier auspices, and shall carry away with me a better knowledge of the

place and its surroundings. I suppose Abraham's three confederate friends, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, resided somewhere in this vicinity.

No doubt; and it is probable that Mamre gave his name to the district north-west of the city, and to the terebinth-tree near Hebron, by which Abraham dwelt, and that Eshcol in like manner gave his name to the valley farther down to the south. These are mere suppositions, however; and of Aner's place of residence we know nothing whatever.

We have been riding northwards through Hebron's vineyards for nearly an hour, and here, on the left of our path, are the ruins of a considerable village.

The place is called Khurbet en Nŭsârah—ruin of the Christians, which seems to imply that it was inhabited by Christians in some former age, and it is said that they were massacred by the Moslems. It is now entirely deserted, except during the vintage, when it is temporarily occupied by the owners of the surrounding vineyards. In the valley south of this ruin is a fountain, called 'Ain en Nŭsârah, from which an aqueduct, according to the local tradition, formerly carried the water to Hebron.

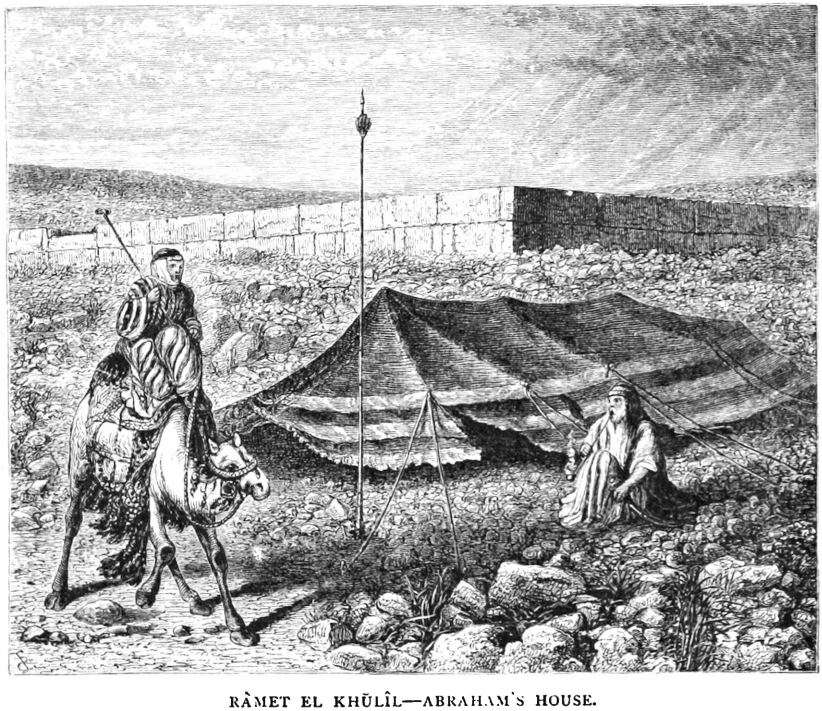
We will now turn eastwards for a mile, to visit the so-called House of Abraham. It is near the path from Hebron to Hŭlhûl, the Halhul of Joshua, a city in the mountains of Judah, which Jerome places near Hebron; and a road leads from thence, through a rough and mostly deserted region, to Tekû'a, the ancient Tekoa of the prophet Amos.[1] I should have liked to have followed the latter, but our men say it is difficult for loaded animals.

This House of Abraham appears never to have been finished, and, considering its present surroundings, one is at a loss to discover the purpose for which it was intended: if for a castle, there is nothing in the immediate neighborhood to command or defend; if for a church, where was the congregation to come from? for I see no indications of former inhabitants who could have needed such an edifice.

That it was never completed upon the scale and in the style originally designed is perfectly evident. All that now appears are

[1] Josh. xv. 58; Amos i. 1; vii. 14.

the foundations of a wall facing the south-west, and another at right angles to it, extending towards the north-west. The first is over two hundred feet long, and the other more than one hundred and sixty, with a space left in the middle of it as if for a portal; but the foundations of the two remaining walls seem never to have been laid. There are only two courses in the existing walls, and



RÂMET EL KHŬLÎL—ABRAHAM'S HOUSE.

the stones in each course are well squared and very massive, some measuring fifteen and eighteen feet in length, three and a half feet high, and all three and a half feet thick. In the angle enclosed by the two walls is a well, called Bîr el Khŭlîl—Well of the Friend, that is, Abraham—about ten feet deep, no doubt ancient, and said to be fed by a never-failing fountain. The masonry is curved in the form of a circle, and near it are the remains of a trough lined with red cement hard as stone. About fifty rods northwards, on the top of the ridge, are a few prostrate columns, and other indica-

tions of a considerable town. The site is now called er Râmeh, and from it the name Râmet el Khŭlîl has been given to this House of Abraham, which the builder, whoever he may have been, commenced, and was not able to finish, and has left these courses of hewn stones out on this lone mountain to puzzle antiquarians and travellers to the end of time.

The place, however, has a history quite interesting, even though somewhat obscure. The Jerusalem Itinerary, written in the fourth century, states that two miles from Hebron is the terebinth where Abraham dwelt, and spake with the angels, and prepared them food. There a basilica of singular beauty was erected by command of Constantine. Eusebius, Jerome, Sozomen the historian, and nearly all Christian writers of those early ages, speak of Abraham's house and the terebinth there; and as the site was north of Hebron, there can be little doubt that this is the place referred to, and these foundations may have been the commencement of the basilica. Dr. Robinson suggests that these massive walls may have been of Jewish origin, erected around the spot where the founder of their race had dwelt; the structure, he adds, would then have corresponded to that around his sepulchre at Machpelah.

It is sad to think that this site was long desecrated by being used for a market-place, where slaves were sold at great public fairs. Jerome repeatedly mentions the fact that, after the destruction of the Jews by Hadrian, in the early part of the second century, the wretched captives—an innumerable multitude of both sexes and of every age—were exposed for sale at such fairs held in this place.

If this be the true site of Abraham's encampment, the terebinth at it has entirely disappeared, or been changed to an oak and transferred to the head of the vale of Mamre, several miles farther west.

Tradition has achieved many things more difficult than that. There may have been a terebinth at the House of Abraham, which having perished, the noble oak we visited yesterday was chosen to represent it, and as such shown to credulous pilgrims, until its reputation and sanctity were fully established. It is reported that the tree itself became an object of religious worship. Africanus says that from a stalk of this terebinth an altar was constructed at which the inhabitants of this region were accustomed to offer

prayers, and the tree itself, though it appeared to burn, was not consumed. They say that a staff of one of the angels that visited Abraham was planted in that place. If it ever grew up into a tree, with such a miraculous origin, it would inevitably be regarded with idolatrous reverence; and perhaps it was destroyed on that account, as the brazen serpent was broken in pieces by Hezekiah because the people of Israel did burn incense to it.[1]

The traditions and associations connected with this site of Abraham's house recall that unique and marvellous visit of the angels to the patriarch, when "the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day."[2] The conversation between Abraham and the angel seems to me to suggest and necessarily include many revelations in respect to some of the deepest mysteries of our faith.

Leaving theologians and commentators to develop the momentous doctrinal significance of this interview, with its promises and prophesies, we find in the narrative characteristic illustrations of patriarchal hospitality and manners; and it coincides with our special purpose to notice and confirm all such, wherever they occur.

There was no "House of Abraham" then, for he was dwelling in a tent. We are to imagine the following scene, which may be taken from many a Bedawîn camp. Abraham's large tent may have been pitched on this very spot, near which was one or more of those evergreen oak-trees from which the place received the name of the Oaks of Mamre, not "the plains of Mamre," as in our version. All around, but at a respectful distance, were stationed the tents of his immediate dependents and servants—they of his household—just as now seen in the camps of the Bedawîn sheikhs and emeers.

Abraham was seated in the door of his tent, the coolest place "in the heat of the day." "And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself toward the ground."[3] From their appearance, Abraham knew that at least one of them was a person of distinction; and, in the true spirit of Oriental hospitality, he hastened to welcome them, and insist upon their honoring him by partaking of the customary "sacrifice."

[1] 2 Kings xviii. 4. [2] Gen. xviii. 1. [3] Gen. xviii. 2.

Addressing the chief person of the three "guests," he said, "My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on."[1] And this he did before he knew the object of their visit, or that they were any other than respectable persons passing by his encampment. This is still a marked feature in unsophisticated Oriental life. An emeer, such as Abraham was, would now not only be aggrieved, but feel insulted, should travellers neglect or refuse to give him an opportunity to exercise or display his hospitality. I have myself been recalled to the tent door of an emeer by messenger after messenger for this very purpose, and obliged to return at great inconvenience, and submit to a detention of several hours, to satisfy the wounded pride of a punctilious sheikh. Where there are several sheikhs in a large encampment, there is often an earnest contest between them for the honor of entertaining distinguished guests. The conduct of Abraham, therefore, was in keeping with Bedawîn manners and etiquette.

Again, what was offered to these visitors is just such as would now be accorded to travellers in like circumstances. "And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it."[2] The expedition with which the food was prepared is also characteristic, and accords well with modern Bedawîn life. I have had a lamb brought to my tent-door by the "young man" on the express order of the sheikh, to show that it was "tender and good," and then had it served up in a surprisingly short time.

"And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."[3] Everything in the detail of this repast is perfectly natural, and on such occasions now the guest would be served in the same fashion. I have found it impossible, at more than one of these entertainments, to induce my host to sit down

[1] Gen. xviii. 3–5. [2] Gen. xviii. 6, 7. [3] Gen. xviii. 8.

and partake with me of the meal which he had prepared. He would stand by to see that every attention was paid, and nothing lacking to my comfort.

We are not to suppose that Abraham and Sarah prepared with their own hands the separate articles of food assigned to them in getting up this extemporaneous repast.

Not necessarily so; though Sarah no doubt knew how to knead bread, and Abraham could easily perform all that is ascribed to him. They had servants in abundance, and, of course, employed as many as were needed.

The abrupt question, "Where is Sarah thy wife?" must have taken Abraham by surprise. Was this in keeping with etiquette on such occasions?

Such a question coming from a strange guest would now be regarded as unwarrantable by any Arab sheikh. The women of the family are not even to be alluded to by strangers; but there must have been that about the questioner that inspired confidence, and assured Abraham that no disrespect was intended or implied, and he therefore replied that she was in the tent.

When "the men rose up from thence" and took their departure, "Abraham went with them to bring them on the way."[1] This, too, I have heard, is the custom of the country.

I have often been thus accompanied. But more was implied on the present occasion than is expressed. "The men looked toward Sodom," where Abraham's nephew, Lot, dwelt, and the bad character of the people of that city was notorious. By this time, also, Abraham had discovered who this mysterious angel-guest really was, and probably felt alarmed in regard to the purpose of his visit to Sodom. That it boded no good to those wicked inhabitants he must have suspected, and his solicitude for the safety of Lot was recognized apparently by the angel. Abraham, of course, well knew the road to the dwelling-place of his nephew, and had probably often gone to one of the mountain-tops east of Hebron, from where he could look down upon those cities of the plain. To some such point he now led the way, and there, with the doomed cities in view, occurred that wonderful intercession in behalf of Sodom.

[1] Gen. xviii. 16.

"And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?" Then he proceeds to diminish the number of the righteous necessary to the salvation of the city to forty-five, to forty, to thirty, to twenty, to ten—"Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."[1]

This is certainly the most extraordinary interview and conversation on record, and numberless questions in regard to almost every part of it are suggested by the narrative.

Most of them are utterly unanswerable, and therefore we will not even allude to them, but turn away from this interesting site, for it is time to resume our ride. The path back to the road to the Pools of Solomon is rough and rocky.

Here comes charging down upon us a promiscuous drove of donkeys, with empty sacks on their backs, and followed by their noisy drivers. Where are they going, and on what errand?

Turn aside and let them pass. To one perfectly familiar with this country they form a feature in every-day life, and one eminently Oriental. These men and their donkeys are off upon an expedition which, if not exactly Biblical, naturally brings to mind similar expeditions made even by the patriarchs and their servants in the olden time, and in this same region. They belong to Halhûl, and are sent to purchase "corn" wherever it can be procured. They may have to go all the way to Gaza, the leader of the party informs me.

During my early walk this morning down the vale of Mamre, I encountered a similar company, and each driver seemed to have at least half a dozen donkeys to look after. The saddles, sacks, ropes, etc., are, I suppose, much like those used in the days when the sons

[1] Gen. xviii. 20, 21, 23–33.

of Jacob descended, possibly along the same road, to bring corn from Egypt.[1]

The supposition is not extravagant, and quite natural, for Jacob resided in this neighborhood at that time, and his sons probably followed the route which modern caravans take across the desert to the land of Goshen. As to the donkeys, many of them in this region come from Egypt; and there has been but little change in the fashion of their sacks and saddles, I presume, from the time of Jacob to the present day. Nor are similar expeditions from this "south country" entirely unknown even now. When, through drought or from other causes, the crops fail, as they often do in the Negeb, the people still send such caravans even as far as Egypt "to buy corn."

It has often occurred to me, when passing a large drove of donkeys and their owners on their way to buy food, that we are not to suppose that the eleven asses on which the brethren of Joseph rode composed the whole caravan. One man often drives half a dozen before him; and no doubt Jacob's sons and their servants took many donkeys with them. Eleven sacks of grain, such as donkeys could carry, would not sustain a household like theirs for a week. It is no objection to this supposition that these servants are not mentioned. There was no occasion to allude to them, and such a reference would have disturbed the perfect unity and touching simplicity of that most beautiful narrative; and it is in accordance with the general practice of Moses, in sketching the lives of the patriarchs, not to confuse the story by introducing non-historic characters. Thus, had it not been for the capture of Lot by Chedorlaomer, we should not have known that Abraham had three hundred and eighteen full-grown men in his household when he dwelt at the very place we have just left; and so, also, had it not been necessary for Jacob to send servants with each drove of animals intended as a present for his brother Esau, we might have been left to suppose that he and his sons alone conducted his flocks in his flight from Mesopotamia. But it is certain that he had a large retinue of servants; and so, doubtless, each of his sons had servants, and it is incredible that they should have gone down to

[1] Gen. xlii. 1, 2.

Egypt without them; indeed there is every reason to believe that on those occasions they formed a considerable caravan. The fact, also, that the sons themselves took part in the work, and that each had his sack under him, is in exact correspondence with the customs of tent-dwelling shepherds at this day. As we have already had occasion to notice, Bedawîn sheikhs dress and fare precisely as their followers do, and bear their full share in the operations of the company, whatever they may be.

This leads me to suggest another idea which I have long entertained in regard to the actual number of persons that went down to Egypt with Jacob himself. It was strictly true that "all the souls which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, were threescore and six;"[1] and these being, so to speak, historic persons, are, according to the usual practice, specifically mentioned. But there must have been a very large company belonging to them, both men-servants, maid-servants, and children.

May we not in this fact find an explanation of the vast multitude to which the Hebrews had grown in so short a time?

I have myself no doubt on the subject. Israel did not sell his home-born servants, but took them into Egypt. There they were absorbed into the Hebrew nation during those generations when all were reduced by their tyrannical masters to one common lot of hard bondage. And thus it came to pass at the time of the Exodus that there were six hundred thousand men that went up harnessed and fit for war. Nor is this custom of absorbing into the different tribes the servants that belonged to them at variance with either ancient or modern practice. That the freedmen were often incorporated with the family, and adopted the name of their masters, is a well-known fact in the history of the Roman commonwealth.

The country from Hebron eastwards to the Dead Sea is mostly a wilderness of rough, barren hills, precipitous mountains, and profound gorges. The only place of much interest on this part of the western shore of the sea itself is 'Ain Jidy, the En-gedi of the Bible, which was given to Judah, and is mentioned by Joshua with the city of Salt.[2]

[1] Gen. xlvi. 26.

[2] Josh. xv. 62.

The original name of En-gedi was Hazezon-tamar—pruning of the palm—and is first mentioned in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, in connection with the expedition of Chedorlaomer, in the time of Abraham. It was immediately after the conquest of this place that the confederate armies marched against Sodom and Gomorrah, and the kings of those cities went out and "joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim. And the vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed."[1] Abraham immediately set out in swift pursuit, overtook the invaders at Dan, and "smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus," rescued Lot, and returned victorious, bringing back everything that had been carried away.[2]

It was to the strongholds of En-gedi that the persecuted David at one time withdrew for fear of Saul; and into one of the caves there Saul went "to cover his feet," when David, who lay hid deep within, arose and cut off the skirt of his robe, and might have slain the wearer also, had he not feared to stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed.[3]

In the account of Saul's pursuit of David to En-gedi, two circumstances are mentioned which are worthy of a passing remark. The first is that there were sheepcotes in connection with the cave into which Saul retired. I have seen scores of them around the mouth of caverns; and, indeed, there is scarcely a cave in the land, whose location will admit of being thus occupied, but has such a cote in front of it, generally made by piling up loose stones into a circular wall, which is covered with thorns as a further protection against robbers and wild beasts. During cold storms, and in the night, the flocks retreat into the cave, but at other times they remain in this enclosed cote. The cavern may have been full of them when the king entered; nor would his presence have disturbed them—as I have found on many occasions—while their constant tramping about the sleeping Saul would have rendered the approach of David wholly unnoticed. I have had them step over me

[1] Gen. xiv. 7–12. [2] Gen. xiv. 13–16. [3] 1 Sam. xxiii. 29, and xxiv. 1–6.

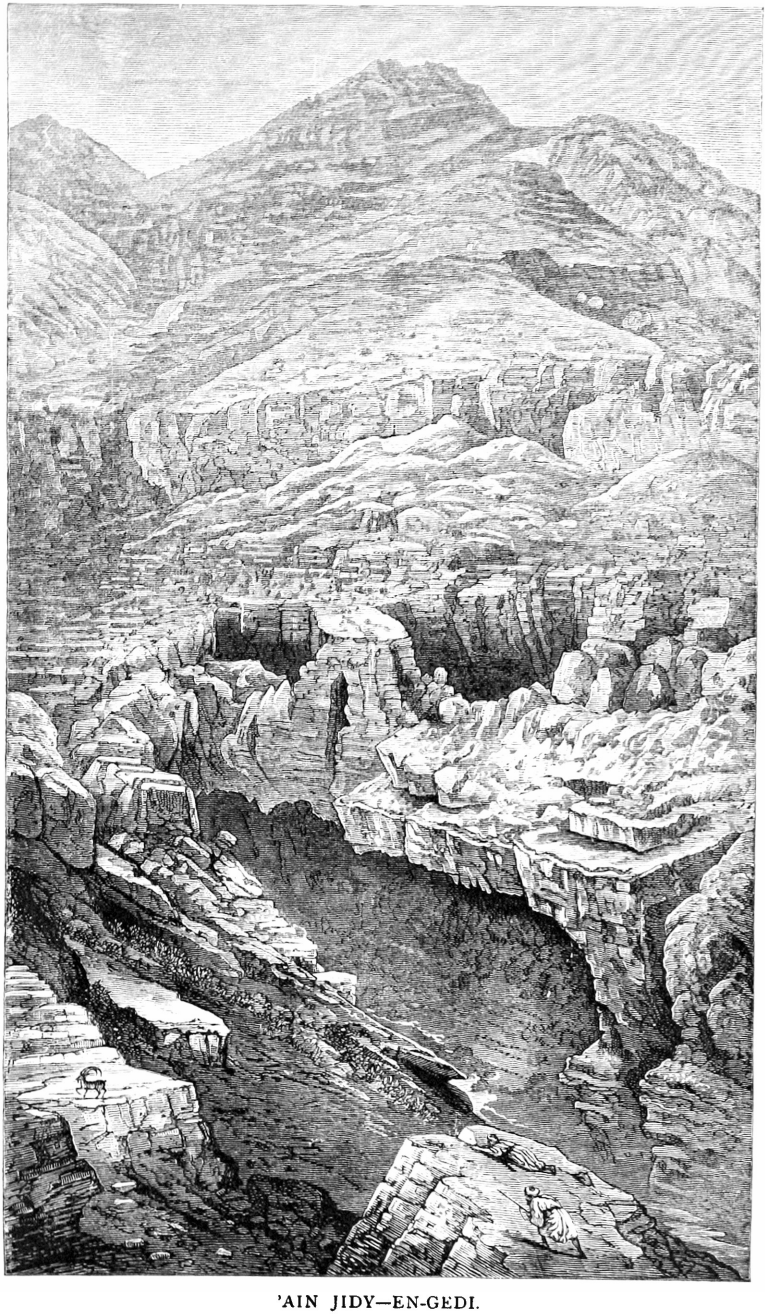
when resting in such caves, and have seen them actually tramp on their sleeping shepherd without disturbing his slumbers. Moreover, these caverns are as dark as midnight, and the keenest eye cannot see five paces inwards; but one who has been long within, and is looking outwards towards the entrance, can observe with perfect distinctness all that takes place in that direction. David, therefore, could watch Saul as he came in, and notice the exact place where he "covered his feet," while Saul could see nothing but impenetrable darkness.

The other fact is that the cliffs about En-gedi were then called "the rocks of the wild goats;"[1] and from them, doubtless, the place received the name En-gedi, 'Ain Jidy—the Fountain of the Kid or Goat. Now, it is a pleasing circumstance that these bold and hardy dwellers upon the rocks are still found in the wild ravines and on the rugged cliffs about 'Ain Jidy. I have seen the skin and powerful horns of those shot there by Arab hunters.

The beden, or wild goat, itself is an ibex, and closely resembles those found on the Alps and other European mountains in size, shape, and color, and also in the reckless daring with which it will scale the most impracticable cliffs. Canon Tristram, while at Callirrhoe, watched one of them "as he leaped from needle to needle, tossing back his enormous curved horns, till they seemed to strike behind his tail, and then, in his bound, gathering all his four feet, and lighting with them all close together on a little point of rock on the face of what seemed a smooth wall of cliff." He even saw another "make a drop, and break the force of the fall by lighting on the front of his horns." When at the same hot springs, I examined with my glass the tremendous cliffs of columnar basalt, hoping to witness a similar exploit, but the wary animals did not make their appearance. They are widely dispersed over this part of the country; and I have found them amongst the awful peaks of Sinai, and they frequent the inaccessible cliffs on both the east and west side of the Dead Sea. They are not numerous anywhere, and are so very wary that none but the most experienced and patient hunter can succeed in shooting them.

The flesh of the beden is said to be superior to that of the

[1] 1 Sam. xxiv. 2.



'AIN JIDY—EN-GEDI.



BEDEN—WILD GOAT.

gazelle; and if it was, as some suppose, of this kind of venison that the "savory meat" which Isaac so loved was made, his surprise when Jacob came with his manufactured venison so soon was quite natural. "How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?"[1] Beden, he knew, was not to be found near the camp, but far away on the rough mountains.

Another suggestion may be in place on this subject. It was probably upon the return of Esau from an unsuccessful hunt of the beden that, faint and ready to die, he was enticed by Jacob to sell his birthright. Those beden-hunts appear to have had a disastrous connection with the history and fortunes of "Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright"—an example by which

[1] Gen. xxvii. 20.

the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews enforces his admonition against such profane and remediless folly. "For afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

The next important incident associated with 'Ain Jidy occurred in the time of Jehoshaphat, "when the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other besides the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi."[1]

From the account of this invasion, it appears that the Midianite host was so vast that Jehoshaphat and all Judah were utterly dismayed; and when, in answer to their supplications, the Lord sent amongst their enemies discord and conspiracy, so that "every one helped to destroy another," the joy and rejoicing of the people of Judah was naturally very great. There is nothing like it in the recorded history of the Hebrew people, for the divine interposition in behalf of Judah was peculiar and unparalleled. As Jahaziel the prophet had predicted, the battle was not theirs, but the Lord's: "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem."[2] It is pleasant and eminently appropriate to notice and meditate upon such instructive narratives wherever our pilgrimage through this land of spiritual types and symbols brings us to scenes where the incidents recorded appear to have occurred.

It is stated in the sixteenth verse of this twentieth chapter of 2 Chronicles that the invaders came up "by the cliff [or ascent] of Ziz." I suppose this was merely a local name for a part of the tremendous gorge of 'Ain Jidy?

No doubt; and the word rendered cliff really means the ascent, and not a special rock in it. "The Moabites and Ammonites came up against King Jehoshaphat, apparently around the south end of the Dead Sea as far as to En-gedi; by the very same route, it would seem, which is taken by the Arabs in their marauding expeditions at the present day, along the shore as far as to 'Ain Jidy, and then

[1] 2 Chron. xx. 1, 2. [2] 2 Chron. xx. 17.

up the pass, and so northwards below Tekoa." This is Dr. Robinson's observation, and I see no reason why they should not have done so.

The site of Tekoa, from which place the people of Judah went forth to encounter the invaders, is well known; but has the valley of Berachah been identified?

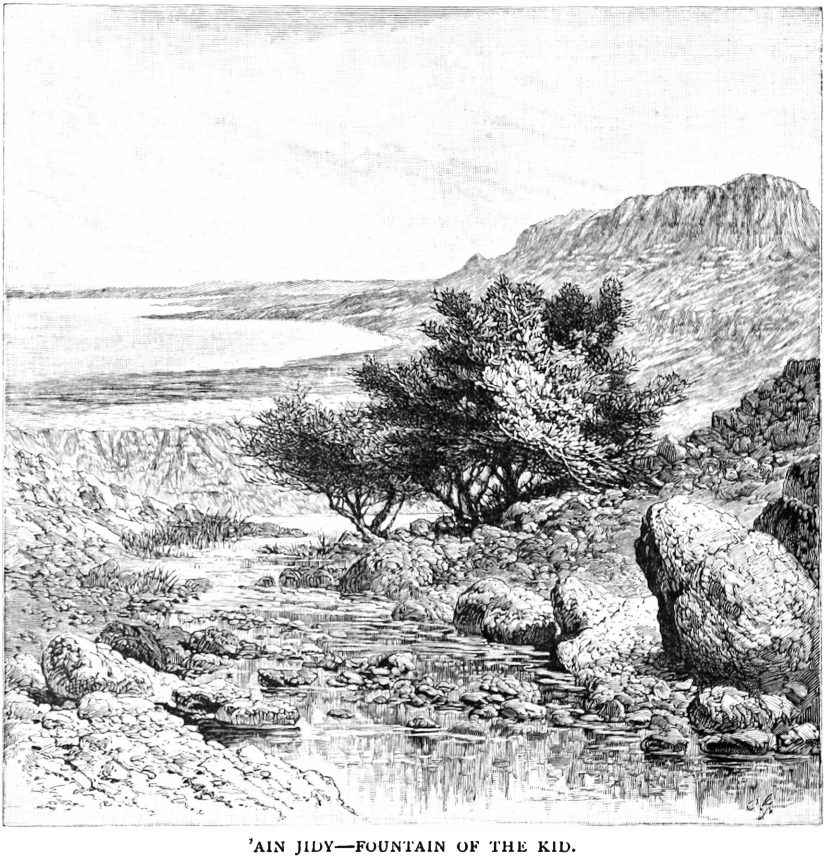
There are the ruins of a village south of Tekoa, called Bereikût, and the wady opposite them, bearing the same name, is doubtless the valley in which the people "assembled themselves; for there they blessed the Lord: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day"—that is, the valley of blessing.[1]

The fountain from which comes the name 'Ain Jidy is in one of the wildest ravines in this country, and some fifteen hundred feet below the level of the general plateau, called "the wilderness of En-gedi." It bursts forth at once a fine stream from beneath a rock upon a shelving terrace, more than four hundred feet above the Dead Sea. The water—sweet, though tepid—rushes down the steep descent in a long or almost continuous cascade over the face of the cliff, down to the shore. Along the entire course of the stream are luxuriant jungles of tall cane, thickets of thorny acacia, the dôm, and other trees and low bushes. Conspicuous along its banks is the 'osher, the Calotropis procera of botanists, the far-famed apple of Sodom,

> Which grew
> Near that bituminous lake where Sodom stood.

Dr. Robinson saw here several trees, "the trunks of which were six or eight inches in diameter, and the whole height from ten to fifteen feet. It has a grayish cork-like bark, with long oval leaves," which "when broken off discharge copiously a milky fluid. The fruit resembles externally a large smooth apple or orange, hanging in clusters of three or four together, and when ripe is of a yellow color. It was fair and delicious to the eye, and soft to the touch; but on being pressed or struck, it explodes with a puff like a bladder or puff-ball, leaving in the hand only the shreds of the thin rind and a few fibres. It is, indeed, filled chiefly with air, like a bladder,

[1] 2 Chron. xx. 26.



'AIN JIDY—FOUNTAIN OF THE KID.

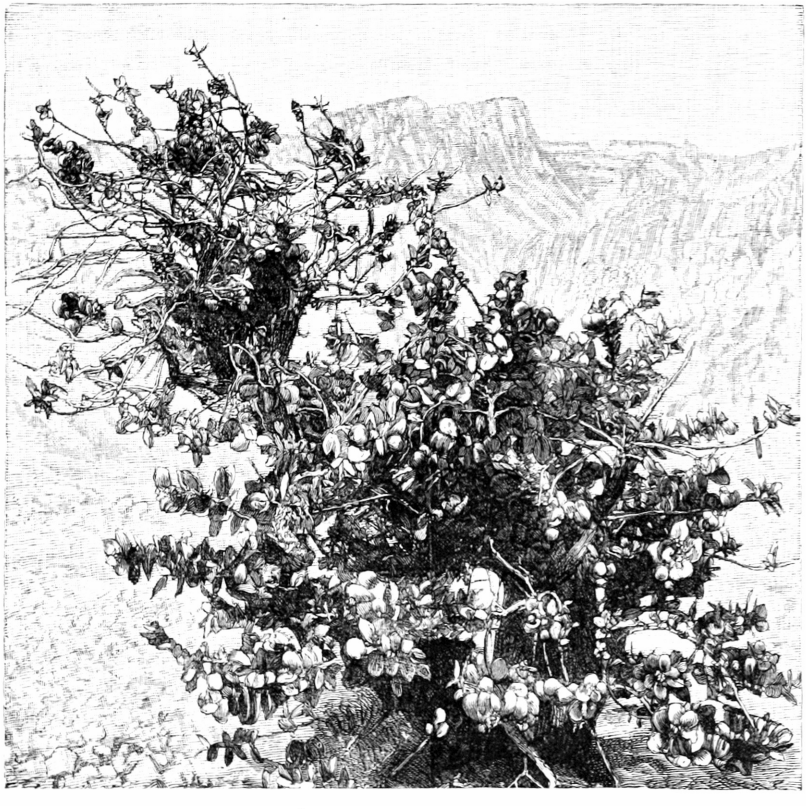
which gives it the round form; while in the centre a small slender pod runs through it from the stem, and is connected by thin filaments with the rind. The pod contains a small quantity of fine silk, with seeds. The Arabs collect the silk, and twist it into matches for their guns, preferring it to the common match, because it requires no sulphur to render it combustible."

The 'osher is supposed to be the fruit referred to by Josephus in corroboration of the Biblical account of the destruction of Sodom. He says, "There are still to be seen ashes reproduced in the fruits, which, indeed, resemble edible fruits in color, but on being plucked with the hands are dissolved into smoke and ashes."[1]

[1] Jos. B. J. iv. viii. 4.

Whether or not these puff-balls of the 'osher be the fruits referred to by Josephus is questionable. They are certainly curious, but their testimony in proof of the destruction of Sodom is not very decisive.

Moses, in his song which he "spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel," mentions the vine of Sodom, but the apples are nowhere alluded to in the Bible. "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom [or, is worse than the vine of Sodom], and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter."[1]



EL 'OSHER—APPLE OF SODOM.

According to Josephus, En-gedi was situated on the shore of the lake Asphaltis, and was celebrated for the beauty of its palm-

[1] Deut. xxxii. 32.

trees and opobalsam; while its vineyards, fragrant orchards, and spicy gardens are alluded to by Solomon in his Song of Songs: "My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi."[1] Just what camphire was cannot now be determined; in the margin it is translated cypress. Dr. Kitto argues that the kopher was the henneh, and certainly the long clusters of henneh-flowers are exceedingly fragrant. The Orientals are extravagantly fond of their odor, and they have an intimate association with love and marriage; so that Solomon might very appropriately compare his beloved to such a cluster. If you turn to the same passage in the Arabic Bible, you will have no difficulty in understanding the meaning. It reads cluster of henneh, and yet it is possible that kopher is merely used in a poetic sense for the name of a very fragrant species of grape that flourished luxuriously in those vineyards of En-gedi. The Arabs of the present day distinguish their choice varieties of grapes by names every way analogous to this.

In the days of Eusebius and Jerome En-gedi was still a large village on the shore of the Dead Sea, and on the small delta at the bottom of the wady are seen the remains of the ancient town. The Bedawîn of the Rashaîdeh tribe, who generally are to be found in the neighborhood, cultivate a few fields of vegetables, and the soil is surpassingly fertile.

But we must now return from 'Ain Jidy to 'Ain edh Dhirweh, to which our long digression has brought us.

For what is this fountain remarkable? I do not remember the name 'Ain edh Dhirweh, or anything resembling it, as occurring in the Bible.

It is, no doubt, connected with Beth-zur, mentioned in Joshua xv. 58 as a town given to Judah, and between Halhul and Gedor; and here it is still, and not far off from the former. Beit Sûr is the present name of the site, and the ancient remains leave no doubt as to its identity with Beth-zur. The scanty ruins that mark the site lie upon the hill a short distance beyond that half-ruined tower on the west side of this narrow ravine. The copious fountain of edh Dhirweh was the chief dependence for water, and the castle may have been intended to defend it. Bèth-zur has very little Biblical

[1] Song i. 14.

history. It was amongst the cities fortified by Rehoboam; and "the ruler of the half part of Beth-zur" repaired the wall of Jerusalem "unto the place over against the sepulchres of David, and to the pool that was made, and unto the house of the mighty."[1] Beth-zur is not again mentioned in the Old Testament, but it bore a conspicuous part in the wars of the Maccabees against the kings of Antioch. It was at Bethsura that Judas, with ten thousand men, attacked and defeated the great army of Lysias, slaying about five thousand of his soldiers.[2]

Josephus states that Bethsura was the strongest place in all Judah, and was held by a garrison of Antiochus; but Simeon, the brother of Jonathan, captured it. This reads strangely to one here on the spot, since it is difficult to find any traces of those fortifications against which Simeon raised banks and brought his engines of war, in order to subdue the place.

Beit Sûr presents a remarkable example of the utter destruction that has fallen upon many ancient sites.

The chief indications of antiquity are at and near the fountain of edh Dhirweh, where are some old foundations, and in the low cliffs left by the quarriers are a few rock-hewn tombs. At the fountain are also the usual stone troughs for watering cattle; and I have generally found the peasants of Halhûl here, with their flocks and herds—a rude and insolent people, whose presence is always annoying.

Eusebius and Jerome believed that 'Ain edh Dhirweh was the fountain where the eunuch was baptized by Philip, and this was the received opinion for many centuries. But there is no reason to suppose that the eunuch chose this route on his way home. There was here no desert; and since Philip, after the baptism, was found at Azotus—that is, Ashdod—twenty miles from this, on the plain of Philistia, the narrative of the baptism in the eighth chapter of Acts would naturally lead us to locate the scene of it in that vicinity.

Is there anything noteworthy about Halhûl, which you pointed out on the mountain to the eastwards, as we descended into this vale of 'Ain edh Dhirweh?

[1] 2 Chron. xi. 7; Neh. iii. 16. [2] 1 Macc. iv. 28–34.

The site is doubtless ancient, but it has no special Biblical history. The name remains unchanged from the days of Joshua. It is mentioned by Jerome in the Onomasticon, and later Jewish writers refer to a tradition that it contained the sepulchre of Gad the seer.[1] The only building of importance in the village is the old mosk, or wely, of Neby Yûnas, which, with several other places throughout the country, claims to be the burial-place of the prophet Jonah, and, from its position on the top of the hill, looks larger and more imposing than it really is.

From this fountain to the pools of Solomon it will take us two hours.

This part of the country appears to be utterly deserted. We have not seen either man or beast since leaving the fountain of edh Dhirweh, at least an hour ago.

Our ride through this solitary region has brought us, however, to this semi-forsaken ruin, called Kûfîn, and the remains of houses and prostrate columns lying about the fields indicate that it was once a place of importance; but the name does not occur in the Bible, nor has it been identified with any old site. West of it is Jedûr, the ancient Gedor; and farther in the same direction is Beit Nŭsîb, answering, probably, to the Nezib of Joshua xv. 43, though the position does not agree very well with the group of cities with which it is there associated. A few miles northwards from Jedûr, but concealed from view by the ridges on our left, is Beit Sakârieh, doubtless the Beth Zacharia at which Judas Maccabæus pitched his camp before the fatal battle took place between him and Antiochus Eupator. It occupied an almost impregnable position, on a ridge jutting out northwards between two valleys.

The scene of that battle was at or near Beth Zacharia, and some distance north of Beth-zur. In the army of Antiochus were many elephants, and the Jews were greatly dismayed at the sight of them. But Eleazar, the brother of Judas, singled out one that was higher than all the rest, and, supposing that the king was upon him, forced his way through the midst of the battle, and, creeping under the elephant, thrust his spear into it, and slew it. Unfortunately, the huge creature fell down upon him, and there he died.

[1] 1 Sam. xxii. 5; 2 Sam. xxiv. 11–14, 18, 19.

Scattered over the site are old foundations, large hewn stones, fragments of columns, ancient cisterns, rock-cut sepulchres, and other indications of a considerable city. This place, also, is not mentioned in the Bible, but it figures conspicuously in later Jewish history, and is repeatedly spoken of by Josephus.

It is well to pause occasionally over the record of incidents which illustrate the immense change for the worse that has befallen this unhappy land in many respects, and especially with regard to its public highways, since Biblical times. Josephus says that Antiochus had eighty elephants in his army, and that they carried upon their backs low towers, in which soldiers were stationed to hurl darts and spears upon the enemy. Very different indeed must have been the condition of that region then from what it is now, or elephants could not have been conducted through it at all. Not only the roads must have been wide and in good repair where there are now only narrow and dangerous bridle-paths, but the surrounding country could not have been so bare and rocky as at present; else it would have been quite impossible to manœuvre with elephants upon the field of battle. It was done, however; and such facts coincide with and serve to corroborate many Biblical statements which imply that formerly there were broad and good roads throughout the land. The chariot of the eunuch is another case in point. No one would now think of his taking the rocky path from Jerusalem to 'Ain edh Dhirweh in his chariot, and thence over the wild, rough mountains to the plain of Philistia. Yet Jerome, who lived in Bethlehem, was not aware, apparently, of any difficulty in the matter; and hence we must suppose that in his day there were practicable roads through this region for such chariots as that of the eunuch. There is, therefore, nothing incredible in those Biblical narratives which necessarily imply that wheeled vehicles of various shapes and sizes were in common use in the country in ancient times. Indeed, it was not until after the conquest of Palestine by the tent-dwelling Arabians, whose favorite means of travel and transport are the horse and the camel, that the public highways were neglected, and of course good roads quickly disappeared.

We are now descending Wady Biyâr, and the ruins of the aqueduct that carried water to the Pools of Solomon in former times

begin to appear in the ravine on our right. It is now broken, and has long been utterly useless.

The name Wady Biyâr may refer to wells in the valley, but these too have been covered up and lost. The land along our path, however, is good, and quite capable of profitable cultivation, if there were people to undertake it.

The general aspect of the country is pleasant and cheerful, and the green oak coppice on either side rings with the varied songs of happy bird life.

Here we have overtaken a large flock of goats, which the shepherd says he is taking to the pools for water; and there is Kŭl'at el Burak, the castle of the pools, at the north-west corner of the upper pool. There we will take our lunch, and drink of the "spring shut up" to which Solomon is supposed to refer.[1]

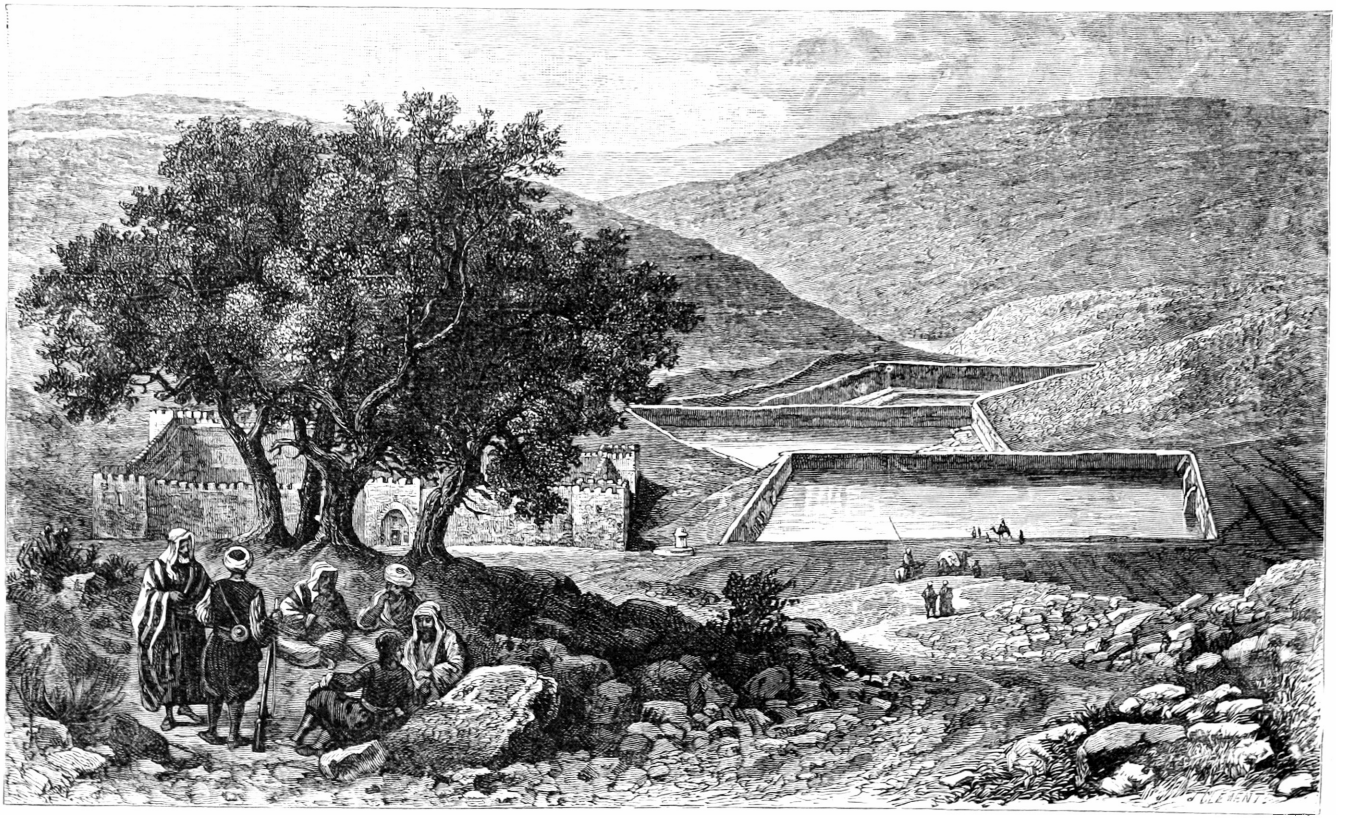
While Salîm arranges for our lunch under the wall of this dilapidated old castle, we will examine these great cisterns.

They are worthy of Solomon, and that is the highest commendation I can think of at present. They are certainly immense reservoirs, and all the more impressive in this utter solitude, where there are no similar structures with which to compare them, or to divide the interest which they inspire.

Dr. Robinson, with his usual accuracy, gives the measurement of the three as follows: The first, to the east, is five hundred and eighty-two by two hundred and seven, and fifty feet deep; the second is four hundred and twenty-three by two hundred and fifty, and thirty-nine feet deep; the third is three hundred and eighty by two hundred and thirty-six, and twenty-five feet deep. All of them, however, are considerably narrower at the upper end, the first being one hundred and forty-eight, the second one hundred and sixty, and the third two hundred and twenty-nine feet.

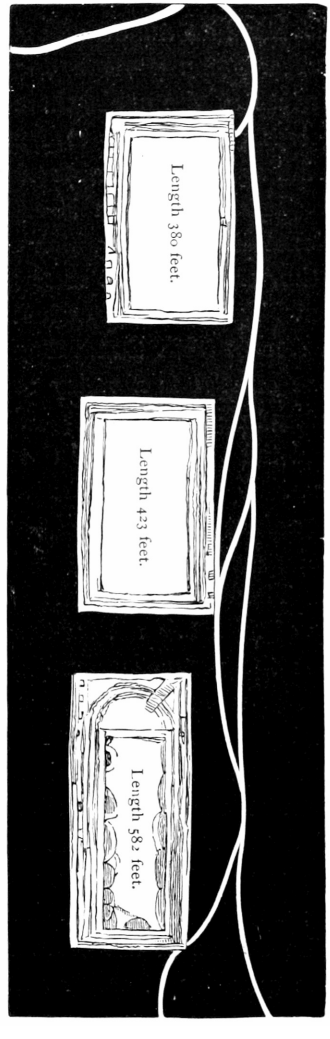
The first time I saw these pools there was very little water in any of them, but I have since been here when the two upper ones were full, and overflowing into the third. The stream from the only fountain in this vicinity was then led along an open canal on the north side of the pools directly into an aqueduct east of them, and thence carried round the shoulder of the hill, apparently to irrigate

[1] Song iv. 12.



EL BURAK—POOLS OF SOLOMON.

gardens in that direction. I examined the underground rooms near the south-west corner of the old castle, where the water is first seen en route for the pools, brought there by an artificial channel, many feet below the surface, from the fountain-head, which is some forty rods to the north-west. Tradition makes that spring Solomon's sealed fountain; and if that be true, the "garden enclosed" was near at hand, perhaps in this little plain which spreads up to the fountain from the pools.[1]



GROUND-PLAN OF SOLOMON'S POOLS.

Looking at these reservoirs, the inquiry naturally arises, How were they kept supplied with water? for the fountain north-east of the upper pool seems quite inadequate for the purpose, except, perhaps, during the rainy season, when, to all appearances, it would be re-enforced by surface-drainage from the surrounding mountains and ravines.

There were several other sources of supply, and the fountain itself was probably much more copious in ancient times than at present, neglected and choked up as it is with mud. It is neither pleasant nor very safe to explore the artificial vaults at the spring-head. A friend of mine came near being suffocated in the attempt. Maundrell says, "There is no avenue to them but by a little hole like to the mouth of a narrow well. Through this hole you descend directly down, but not without some difficulty, for about four yards, and then arrive at a vaulted room some fifteen paces long and eight broad. Joining to this is another room

[1] Song iv. 12.

of the same fashion, but somewhat less. Both these rooms are covered with handsome stone arches, very ancient, and perhaps the work of Solomon himself. You find here four places at which the water rises. From these separate sources it is conveyed by little rivulets into a kind of basin, and from thence is carried by a large subterranean passage down to the pools. In the way, before it arrives at the pools, there is an aqueduct of brick pipes, which receives part of the stream, and carries it, by many turnings and windings about the mountains, to Jerusalem."[1]

This description is sufficiently detailed, but needs some additional explanation, which unfortunately we cannot furnish. Various other arrangements were made to insure an adequate supply of water. The ruined aqueduct we noticed in Wady Biyâr once brought a stream from that valley directly to the lower pool, and a similar one existed in a valley south-east of the pools. This latter canal united with the one passing the corner of the castle of el Burak, and the two supplied the aqueduct which carried water to Jerusalem. I suppose there was originally a connection between this aqueduct and the pools, and that when necessary these vast reservoirs could be availed of for the supply of Jerusalem.

The aqueduct to the Holy City is remarkable, not for the solidity of the work, nor for the quantity of water which it could convey, but the very contrary. It is built upon the mere surface of the land, and made of small unhewn stones, which only partially cover and protect the brick pipes mentioned by Maundrell. The canal is always kept in repair to the foot of the ridge upon which Bethlehem stands, and, indeed, it furnishes the chief supply of water to that town. I have ridden along it repeatedly, and always found it tapped in many places, and sheep and cattle allowed free access to it; but the water is nowhere drawn off for the purpose of irrigation. The calibre of the earthen pipe is only eight inches, and therefore the quantity of water carried by it could never have been great. The canal passes along the eastern end of the hill of Bethlehem, and thence by numberless windings, to get round the heads of the ravines, it is conducted to Jerusalem. Near that city it was carried along the west side of the valley of Gihon to the north-western end

[1] Maundrell's Journey.

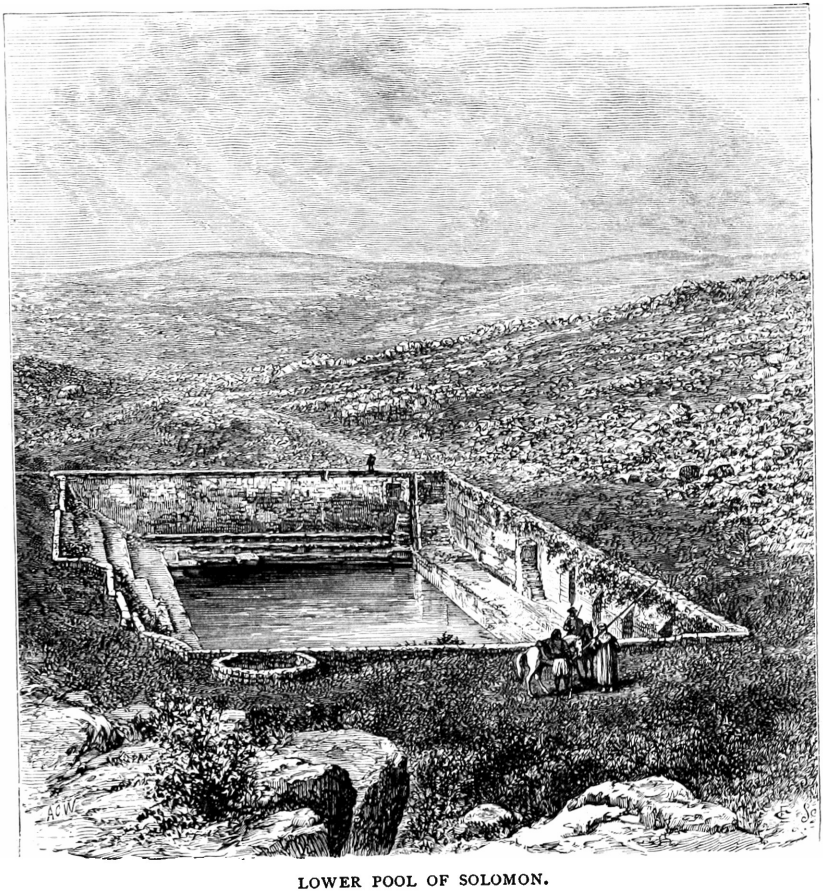
of the lower pool of Gihon, where it crossed to the east side, and, winding round the southern declivity of Zion below Neby Dâûd, finally entered the south-eastern corner of the Temple area, where the water was employed in the various services of the sanctuary. Rarely, however, is it in repair to the north of Bethlehem; and I have never seen the water from these pools enter the Holy City. This aqueduct is probably less ancient than the pools; but that is not certain, for I have noticed that such canals, where the line was carried along the surface of the country, were usually constructed of small stones, laid up in a careless manner, and this, too, where we know that the work is ancient. The ephemeral character of the present aqueduct, therefore, does not prove that it is modern.

As there is now but little water in the two lower pools, we can easily see that the constructors did not cut away perpendicularly the rock on the sides of the ravine, but left the strata much as they found them, covering them, of course, with hard stucco. The lowest pool shows these offsets made by the strata in a very striking manner. There are artificial steps in the two lower corners of this pool, by which it is easy to descend to the bottom. The floor seems to be merely the original native rock which formed the bed of the ravine.

The proportions of this lower pool of Solomon are truly royal: nearly six hundred feet long, two hundred feet wide, and fifty deep. When full, it could float the largest ship on the ocean.

If Solomon really constructed these vast reservoirs of el Burak, as they are now called—and even Dr. Robinson is disposed to admit the fact—it is probable that it was on the neighboring hills that he planted the vineyards, and in the valleys to the north-east of them made the gardens and orchards of all kinds of fruits, and here these pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees, by which and other like data he worked out the great problem of human affairs to the final product of "vanity and vexation of spirit."[1] Josephus, however, says that those gardens were at Etam, which our friends in Jerusalem have identified with Ŭrtâs, its fountains and fine gardens.

[1] Eccles. ii. 4-6, 11.



LOWER POOL OF SOLOMON.

Well, at Ŭrtâs let it be. I think there is good reason to rest in the general correctness of this identification for Solomon's plantations; and the thought that the wise king of Israel had often retired to these then well-wooded and well-watered hills and valleys adds to the charm of this day's instructive ramble through the hill-country of Judæa.

We must now pursue our ride down the valley of Ŭrtâs, and shall follow for some time the line of the canal by which the water was conveyed to Jerusalem.

When I was encamped here in 1865, to take photographs of the pools, the atmosphere was suddenly darkened by an immense flock

of swallows, or, rather, a species of swift, that came up like a cloud of locusts. Many thousands gathered above the upper pool, which was nearly full of water, and their main object appeared to be the taking of a morning bath. Their flight was so swift that they cut the air with a peculiar noise, like the whizzing of a ball, especially when from on high they darted down upon the surface of the water, which they did with a shrill scream, as though frightened or exultant at their own daring exploit. The air was so crowded with them that one of the men with his gun, firing at random, brought down less or more at each discharge. They are twice the size and more of the ordinary chimney-swallow, and are marked with white on the under part of the body. The Arabs of the neighborhood called this species sharŭgrŭg or khŭttŭf, and said that they were good to eat. This bird is probably the same as the Alpine swift—the Cypselus melba—which is much larger than the common swift, and is brown above and white below. There are many varieties of swallow in the country, and they are repeatedly referred to in the Bible. As the day advanced, and the heat increased, they all disappeared, resorting to the cliffs, as I was informed, in the surrounding valleys, where they build their nests.

We took a general view of the pools from the abandoned house at the head of the small plain west of the castle. The former owner, a young man, who figures as a lad in the narrative of Lieutenant Van de Velde, built the house, and lived in it by himself at this lonely place. Unfortunately, he had excited the hostility of the Bedawîn in the neighborhood; and they, finding him near the Frank Mountain, cruelly murdered him. The house was then fast falling into ruin; the wood-work was all gone, and the vines and bushes planted in his garden had already been devoured by the camels of the Bedawîn. Many similar ruins are to be found in all parts of the East, and scenes equally tragical are generally connected with their destruction.

I had an Arab horseman for guide in this region who belonged to el Khŭdr, a small village situated about a mile to the north of the pools. Amongst other marvels, he assured me that el Khŭdr—St. George—and his horse were still in the land of the living. At his mukâm, in that village, he is supposed to reside, at least occa-

sionally, in a vaulted chamber that has on one side of it a small hole, through which the end of a chain is passed out, and locked around the neck of any insane person brought there to be cured. There the poor unfortunate wretch must stand until el Khŭdr comes to unlock the chain and set him free. This, my horseman naively asserted, happened whenever Allah decided that it should be done. These fables about St. George, or Elias — for there is much confusion in the popular traditions regarding him—are met with all over this country. At el Khŭdr is a small Greek convent of St. George, which belongs to the great convent of Jerusalem.

There are three places to the south-east of the pools which I have visited with great interest—Tekû'a, the ancient Tekoa; Mughârat Khŭreitûn, the traditionary cave of Adullam; and Jebel el Fureidîs, the supposed Beth-haccerem of Nehemiah and Jeremiah,[1] the Herodium of Josephus, and the Frank Mountain of the Crusaders. We shall pass in sight of this latter, and I will give you some account of the other two while we are riding along.

I once crossed the wild region to the east of us on a visit to Tekoa and the so-called cave of Adullam. The whole country is now deserted, except by the Arabs, who pasture their flocks on those barren hills — a rude and sinister-looking generation. The ruins of that ancient city, now called Tekû'a, are some three miles south of the pools of Solomon, and cover a broad swell of the mountain, which runs up to a great height towards the south-west. The only noteworthy remains are those of an old castle near the top of the ridge, some square towers, the foundations of a Greek church, and ruins of houses built of square stones, some of which are bevelled.

It was probably owing to its great elevation, commanding an outlook over the whole surrounding country, that Jeremiah called upon the children of Benjamin to "blow the trumpet in Tekoa."[2]

Tekoa was the birthplace or the home of the prophet Amos, was it not?

So at least we are led to infer from what he says in the first verse of his prophecy, and there he dwelt amongst the herdmen. "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herd-

[1] Neh. iii. 14; Jer. vi. 1. [2] Jer. vi. 1.

man, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit," as he tells King Amaziah.[1] And the entire style of his prophecies corroborates his own account of himself. It is not from this fact, however, that Tekoa is generally remembered. I never hear the name without recalling the interview between the "wise woman" of Tekoa and King David, whom Joab suborned "by a parable to incline the king's heart to fetch home Absalom."[2] The whole narrative is Oriental, pure and simple, and the entire scene might be enacted to-day in the audience-chamber of any Eastern potentate. And there are plenty of wise widows in this land who could act the part of this cunning emissary of Joab to perfection. David was thoroughly perplexed by the strange story of her trouble and alarm concerning herself and her son. At length he discovers the hidden purport of her rambling talk, and brings her to confess that "the hand of Joab" was in all this business. "He put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid: to fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth."[3]

The conduct of Joab himself on this occasion is also in perfect keeping with that of the courtier of the present day, and characteristic of the man and his position at the court of David. He was high in office, but, as he well knew, he was neither loved nor trusted. He therefore dare not go directly to the king and petition for the return of Absalom. When, however, he had by this roundabout way ascertained that David would consent, he appeared before him in the attitude of the deepest reverence, "fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant."[4] This is the language of cold stately etiquette, and implies anything but cordial friendship and confidence. The narrative lifts the veil that conceals the interior of this ancient and august court. David granted Joab's request, but he would more willingly have ordered his head to be cut off, if he in turn had dared to do so. "And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing:

[1] Amos vii. 14. [2] 2 Sam. xiv. 1–18. [3] 2 Sam. xiv. 19, 20. [4] 2 Sam. xiv. 22.

go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again. Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face."[1]

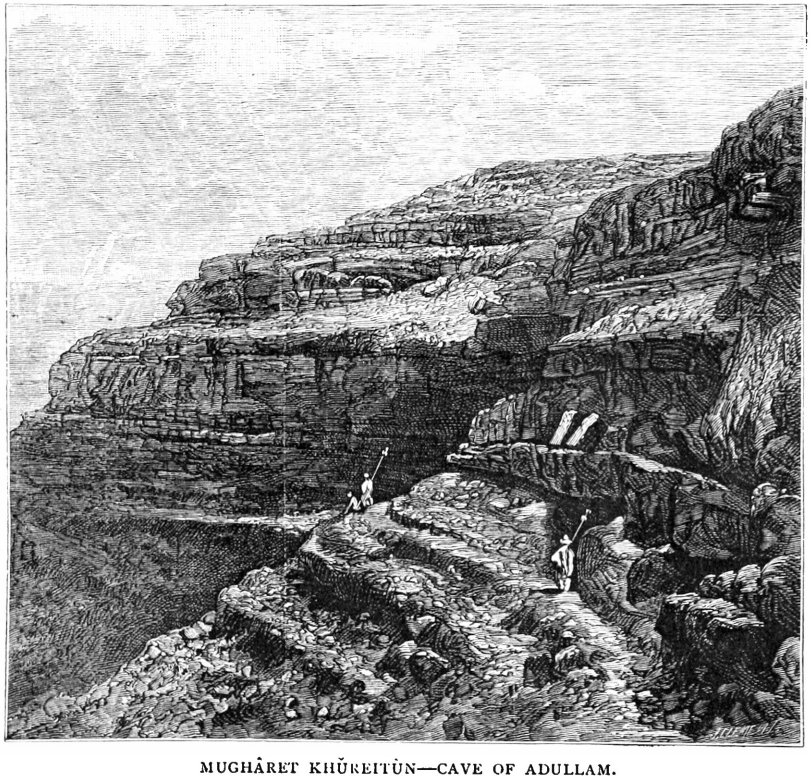
Having passed eastwards of Tekû'a, we descended a shallow wady for about a mile to some curious old buildings which overhang the tremendous gorge of Wady Ŭrtâs, there called Wady Khŭreitûn, and which gives its name to the ruins. Leaving our horses in charge of some Arabs, and taking one for a guide, we started for the cave now known as Mughâret Khŭreitûn, having a fearful gorge below, gigantic cliffs above, and the path winding along a narrow shelf of the rock. At length, from a great rock hanging on the edge of the shelf, we entered by a long leap a low window which opened into the perpendicular face of the cliff. We were then within the traditional hold of David, and, creeping half doubled through a narrow crevice for a few rods, we stood beneath the dark vault of the first grand chamber of this mysterious and oppressive cavern.[2] Our whole collection of lights did little more than make the damp darkness visible. After groping about as long as we had time to spare, we returned to the light of day, fully convinced that, with David and his lion-hearted followers inside, all the strength of Israel under Saul could not have forced an entrance—would not have even attempted it.

Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, made a careful survey of this remarkable cave. He says: "Half-way down the rugged path we turned off along a ledge of rock some eight feet wide to the cavern. A huge fallen block, about seven feet high, has to be surmounted; between this and the upper rock is a space of two and a half feet. Continuing along the ledge we come to another fallen block, and mounting this we are confronted by the door of the cave. The entrance to the cave seems the only part which has been touched by the hand of man. Several short intersecting passages would place an invader who had succeeded in penetrating so far entirely at the mercy of the defenders.

"A few feet from the entrance we came into a large chamber some sixty feet long, and perhaps thirty or forty feet high. A low burrow, which has to be traversed on hands and knees, leads from this to another chamber; mounting a few feet, a narrow cleft leads

[1] 2 Sam. xiv. 21, 24. [2] 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2; 2 Sam. xxiii. 13–17.

to another large chamber, to reach which one has to descend a steep slide some fourteen feet high. From this chamber a main passage, with intricate ramifications, which can only be understood by the plan, leads to the last chamber, beyond which nothing extends but a narrow winding passage, which, in no place large, at last contracts to a mere crack. The greatest length of the cavern is five hundred and fifty feet.



MUGHÂRET KHŬREITÛN—CAVE OF ADULLAM.

"The air of the cave was dry and pure, though earth washed down from above shows that water penetrates it in the winter. The first chamber, however, would probably always continue dry. The whole cave seems formed by water action; the sides and roof are smooth, with frequent rounded hollows; and in more than one place passages run side by side, with merely a thin strata of rock

separating them. The rock is hard and very white. We found bats in some of the chambers, but not in great numbers. In one of the side-passages I picked up fragments of a brass or copper fibula much corroded; this and a piece of very ancient coarse pottery were the only relics we found."

This description of the first scientific survey that I have seen is very satisfactory; and Mr. Drake, while withholding judgment as to the identity of the site, says that the cave of Wady Khŭreitûn is admirably adapted for the stronghold of an outlaw. He also mentions another fact of the utmost importance to those who occupied the cave. Above the cave, "to the right, a steep, rugged zigzag descends to a broad ledge of rock leading to 'Ain en Natúf—the Dripping Spring—where, even at this dry season [October 25th], there was a sufficient supply of water to fill a wine-bottle in three or four minutes. The water is collected in two little rock-hewn basins. Two other openings besides the door [of the cave] fully command the path to 'Ain en Natúf, which, consequently, could not be used by an attacking party; while, owing to the overhanging rocks, a besieged party might draw water with impunity, as the wady is too broad for archers to be able to harass them to any considerable extent."

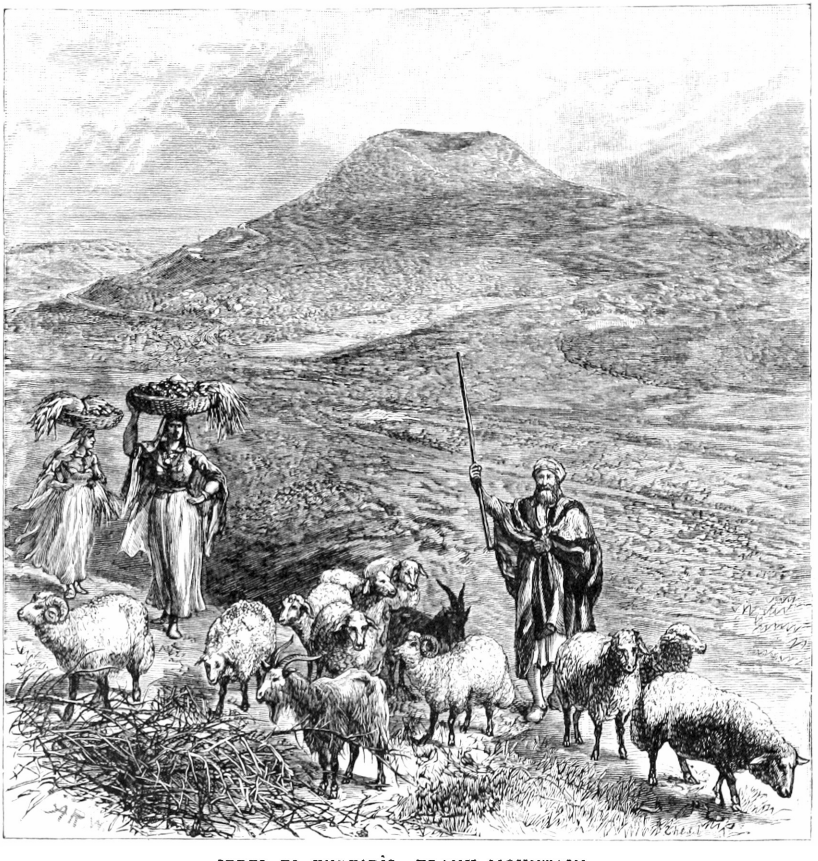
I see no good reason, therefore, to disturb the tradition which makes this the hold into which David retired with his father's house when he fled from Gath, and in which he first collected and organized his band of trusty followers. David, as a shepherd leading his flocks over these hills, was doubtless acquainted from his boyhood with all the intricacies of this great cavern, just as these Arab shepherds, his successors, now are; and what more natural, therefore, than that he should flee thither in the day of his extremity? It was out in the wild desert, far from the haunts of Saul, and not likely to be visited by him. It was also in the line of direct communication with Moab, whither he sent his parents and the women of his train, while he abode still in the hold.[1] Again, we know that many of his subsequent exploits and escapes from Saul were in this region and south of it; and, finally, there is a sort of verbal accuracy in speaking of the topography—David's family are said

[1] 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.

to have gone down to him from Bethlehem. Now this cavern is two hours to the south-east of that village, and the path descends rapidly nearly the entire distance. It must be admitted, however, that the geographical indications in the two accounts of David's retreat to the cave of Adullam, in 1 Samuel xxii. 1–4, and 2 Samuel xxiii. 13–16, are not very distinct, but the latter notice seems to imply that it was at no great distance from Bethlehem; and from the first we learn that David took his father and mother to Moab, from the cave—an operation more natural and less dangerous than it would have been from any part of the plain of Philistia, where the *city* of Adullam was undoubtedly situated, as appears from Joshua xv. 35, 2 Chronicles xi. 7, 8, Nehemiah xi. 30, Micah i. 14, 15, in all of which the city of Adullam is associated with towns in Philistia. The same is implied in the account of the fight of Judas with Gorgias, as given in the twelfth chapter of 2 Maccabees. From all these statements, it seems nearly certain that the cave and the city were entirely different places, the latter being in the Shephelah, and not far from Gath and Mareshah, while the cave was on the mountains, and southwards from Bethlehem, on the way to Moab.

Leaving the cave, and escaping from the importunity of the Bedawîn encamped at the ruins of Khŭreitûn, we returned along a shallow valley for a mile or more, and then descended by a very rocky path into Wady Ŭrtâs, and passed northwards round the western base of Jebel el Fureidîs. This is an enormous mount, about four hundred feet high, mostly natural, I suppose, but truncated, steep, and round, and rises precisely like the cone of a volcano.

At one time I came to Jebel el Fureidîs from Bethlehem, a ride of two hours over a rocky and slippery path. From its remarkable resemblance to a crater, I was led to search carefully for indications of volcanic origin, but could find none. The chalky marl rock changes into an intensely hard dark-colored limestone, abounding in chert, splintered and broken up in an extraordinary manner. The vineyards south-east of Bethlehem have all been laid waste by the Bedawîn, and the ruined watch-towers and neglected terraces indicate that the devastation of these spoilers, worse than that of the locusts, has been wrought in times comparatively modern.



JEBEL EL FUREIDÎS—FRANK MOUNTAIN.

It has been suggested that this mount marks the site of Beth-haccerem, mentioned in Nehemiah iii. 14, where "Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of Beth-haccerem," is said to have repaired one of the gates of Jerusalem; and also in Jeremiah vi. 1, where the people were exhorted to "set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction." As Beth-haccerem is associated with Tekoa, it was most probably somewhere in this neighborhood; and Jebel el Fureidîs is admirably adapted for a beacon of fire, to give warning of evil approaching from any direction. There is no other tell of equal height and size in Palestine.

It is more probable that the fortress and city of Herodium, mentioned by Josephus as the place selected by Herod the Great for a fortified retreat, were erected on this mountain. He says: "It was distant from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. It was strong by nature, and fit for such a building. It is a sort of moderate hill, raised to a farther height by the hand of man, till it was of the shape of a woman's breast. It is encompassed with circular towers, and hath a straight ascent up to it, which ascent is composed of steps of polished stones, in number two hundred. Within it are royal and very rich apartments, of a structure that provided both for security and for beauty. About the bottom there are habitations of such a structure as are well worth seeing, both on other accounts and also on account of the water which is brought thither from a great way off, and at vast expenses; for the place itself is destitute of water."[1]

No doubt Herod made it a kind of paradise, from which it may have derived its present Arabic name, Jebel el Fureidîs — Little Paradise Mountain. It is not certain that Herod ever resided here, and all his lavish expense only prepared a tomb for his dead body, which was brought from Jericho, where he died, and was buried here with great display and ostentation. Josephus gives two separate descriptions of this august funeral.[2]

Traces of all these supposed works of Herod remain. The circumference of the mountain-top is about seven hundred and fifty feet; and the foundations there of the wall and towers are still visible, and also the remains of a considerable town at the north-western base of the hill. Mr. Drake and others of the Palestine Exploration Fund mention the broken aqueduct by which water was conducted thither from the Pools of Solomon, or from some of the springs in the valley of Ŭrtâs. There is also a broken cistern amongst the ruins, the dimensions of which are some two hundred feet square, which was probably filled by this aqueduct.

I notice that Jebel el Fureidîs is called Frank Mountain by travellers, and is so put down on the maps.

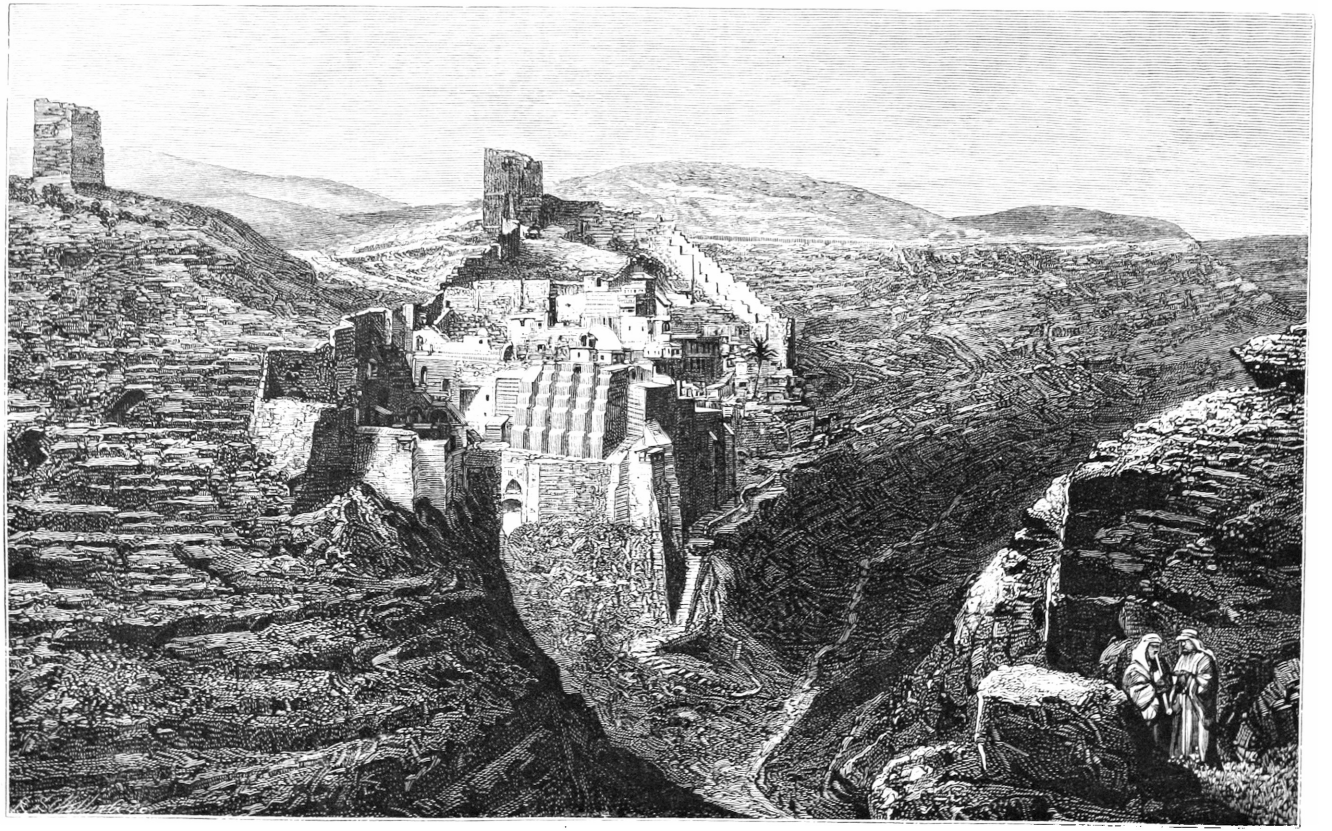
That name appears to have been given to it near the close of the seventeenth century, but the tradition that represents the last

[1] Ant. xv. ix. 4.

[2] Ant. xvii. viii. 3, and Wars i. xxxiii. 9.

castle which the Crusaders held after the capture of Jerusalem as being situated upon it dates from the end of the fifteenth century.

On the occasion of my visit to the cave of Adullam, so much time was spent at Jebel el Fureidîs and the vicinity, that the declining sun began to cast his mild and subdued light over the plains below Bethlehem, where the shepherds were keeping watch by night when the world's Redeemer was born; and we were admonished to make all haste to reach Mar Saba, where we were to spend the night. Somehow or other we made but slow progress, and night came upon us bewildered in a labyrinth of wadies while there were yet two long hours to Mar Saba, whither the muleteers had preceded us, and which we had to reach, or otherwise sleep out in the wilderness supperless, and at the mercy of our villanous guides. On we marched, up and down, and down and up, over sharp ridges, in deep wadies, and upon slippery rocks or through stiff mud; but finally, without accident or injury of any kind, we dismounted at the entrance to the convent. I shall never forget that evening ride. Our imaginations had been held wide awake from hour to hour by bad roads, doubtful guides, and the dismal notes of owls and jackals. The moon, rising over the brown hills of Moab, flashed and trembled on the Dead Sea, giving just light enough to make the crags appear more stern and the chasms more profound. At the convent, two towers, one on either brow of the gorge, loomed up through the misty moonbeams, like grim old giants, to guard the access. We entered through a low iron door, went down, turned round, passed through a second door, then down again by winding stairs, across queer courts, and along dark passages, until we reached at length our rooms, hanging between cliffs that towered to the stars, or seemed to, and yawning gulfs which darkness made bottomless and dreadful. It was a transition sudden and unexpected from the wild mountain to the yet wilder, more vague and mysterious scenes of Oriental enchantment. Lights gleamed out fitfully from hanging rocks and doubtful caverns. Winding stairs, with balustrade and iron rail, ran right up the perpendicular cliffs into rock chambers, where the solitary monk was drowsily muttering his midnight prayers. It was long after that hour before sleep visited my eyes, and then my dreams were of Arabs and frightful chasms.



DEIR MAR SABA—SANTA SABA.

Daylight next morning stripped off much of the wild and fearful from the midnight view, but even then Mar Saba was the strangest convent I had ever seen. We, of course, visited the curiosities of the place: St. Saba's sepulchre, beneath an octagonal mausoleum; the numerous chapels, covered with pictures and Greek inscriptions; the really splendid church, blazing with silver and gold; the vault, filled with fourteen thousand skulls of martyred monks! and I know not what besides, with which this convent-castle is crowded. No description had in the least prepared me for what I saw, and no pen-picture could do justice to the original. It must be seen, and every visitor will be well rewarded for his three hours' ride from Jerusalem to visit it. The stupendous cliffs of Wady en Nâr —the Kidron—full of caverns, now the home of bats and owls instead of monks and hermits, are not the least impressive of the many wonders that cluster around this strange retirement of Santa Saba.

We have passed quite away from the fine valley of Ŭrtâs, and yet I think it is a place of considerable interest.

It is believed to be the ancient Etam of the Hebrew kings—a name which rarely occurs in the Bible, and nowhere in such relation to other places as to indicate this locality, unless it be in 2 Chronicles xi. 6, where it is named along with Bethlehem and Tekoa. The truth is that its celebrity depends upon the fables of the rabbins more than the pages of sober history. The fountain near the village, however, must have always filled the valley below it with orchards and flourishing gardens, and it is not an unreasonable supposition that David, who so intensely longed for even a drink of water from his native Bethlehem, would have shown a similar partiality for this pretty valley below it, where he must have often played while a child. Not unlikely he had purchased it before he died, and when Solomon came into possession of it, he further adorned it with pools and orchards; and in traversing this vale, I always love to reproduce in imagination the scene when it was filled with fruits and flowers, and these many-shaped hills on either side, and on all sides, were terraced to their tops, and dotted everywhere with country villas, amidst olive-groves, fig-orchards, and clustering vines. Josephus says that "there was a certain place, about fifty

furlongs distant from Jerusalem, which is called Etham; very pleasant it is in fine gardens, and abounding in rivulets of water; thither did he [Solomon] use to go out in the morning, sitting on high in his chariot."[1]

Our present approach to the convent of Santa Saba will be by the sober light of day, and must lack the elements of romance. As the country is now quiet and safe, there is no reason why we should shut ourselves up within the walls of the convent; and therefore our tents will be pitched on the usual camping-ground outside of its gates. In the morning we will visit it at our leisure.

[1] Ant. viii. vii. 3.

XII.

SANTA SABA TO JERICHO.

Convent of Santa Saba.—Saint Saba.—Santa Saba to the Dead Sea and 'Ain es Sultân.—Juniper-tree.—Coals of Juniper.—Mount Hermon.—The Jordan.—Plain of Jericho.—Excursion with the Pilgrims to the Jordan.—The Dead Sea.—Visit of Vespasian.—Return of the Pilgrims to Jerusalem.—Camping-ground at 'Ain es Sultân.—Extensive Aqueducts.—'Ain Dûk and 'Ain Nawâ'imeh.—March of the Hebrews to attack Ai.—Relief of Gibeon.—Wady Nawâ'imeh to Bethel.—Castle of Doch.—'Ain Dûk to the Jordan.—Kŭrn Sŭrtabeh, Altar of Ed.—Plain of the Jordan a Wilderness.—Bluffs above the Jordan.—Ferry of Nawâ'imeh.—Débouchure of the Jordan into the Dead Sea.—Crossing of the Jordan by the Hebrew Nation.—Overflow of the Jordan in Harvest.—Sources of the Jordan.—Flats on the Banks of the River.—Rise and Fall of the Jordan earlier than in Ancient Times.—Kŭsr el Yehûd, Convent of St. John.—Traditional Sites of the Baptism of Christ.—Pilgrims' Bathing-place.—Accounts of the Baptism by the Evangelists.—Probable Location of the Baptism.—Bethany and Bethabara.—Mukhâdat el 'Abârah.—'Ain Hajla.—Beth-hoglah.—Kŭsr Hajla.—Location of Sodom and Gomorrah.—Abraham and Lot.—Biblical References to the Sites of Sodom and Gomorrah.—Opinions of Authors.—Ciccar.—Cities of the Plain not Submerged.—Probable Site of the Doomed Cities.—'Ain es Sultân.—Healing of the Fountain by Elisha.—Site of Ancient Jericho.—Biblical History of Jericho.—Return of the Captives of Judah to Jericho by the Samaritans.—Capture of Zedekiah by the Chaldeans.—Visits of our Lord to Jericho.—Blind Bartimeus.—Zaccheus.—Pompey.—Cleopatra.—Herod the Great.—Rose of Jericho.—Zŭkŭm, Balm of Gilead.—Burckhardt's and Bruce's Description of the Balm.—Jericho the Centre of Religious Pilgrimages.—Erîha, Modern Jericho.—Present Inhabitants.—Jiljûlieh, Gilgal.—Tabernacle at Gilgal.—Samuel and Saul.

April 23d.

OUR morning ramble through this strange convent has had, to me, all the charm of a new revelation, disclosing some of the hidden mysteries of monastic life.

I am glad you have had an opportunity to spend a morning in an Oriental convent, and become acquainted with these remarkable institutions. Santa Saba is amongst the very best specimens, and it seems to have been a sort of frontier castle in the heart of this stern desert of Judæa. Saint Saba was probably attracted to the

spot by those very savage aspects of the scene which strike the mind with dread—the howling wilderness, the stern desolation, the terrific chasms, the oppressive solitude, the countless caverns, the ever-prevalent dangers from wild beasts and wild robbers: these and such as these were the charms that fascinated his morbid imagination. We would not judge the dead, however; nor will I forget the shelter and good dinner which this institution has afforded me in the past. It is really, in our day, a very respectable hospice; and gentlemen, but not ladies, can scarcely do better than to spend one of the two nights there which an excursion from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea and the Jordan necessarily requires. The régime, it is true, partakes of both military sternness and conventual austerity, so far as the fortress itself and the monks within it are concerned; but both are necessary, the one to repel the attacks of the Bedawîn, who prowl about at all seasons, watching for an opportunity to force an entrance and to plunder the rich treasures of the establishment; the other to meet the requirements of the Church.

And now, as we take our departure from the convent, it may be proper to inquire into the history of Santa Saba himself.

He was one of the most celebrated men of his age, and his story deserves to be studied as an instructive illustration of the dominant spirit of the times in which he lived. His parents were persons of high rank, and he was born, A.D. 439, in a village of Cappadocia, called Mutalasca. They went to Alexandria, in Egypt, when Saba was quite young, leaving him under the care of two uncles. By them he was placed, when only five years old, in the convent of Flavianæ. There he became so enamored of monastic life that, when fifteen years old, he refused to engage in secular employments or to take possession of his own property, quoting in justification of his conduct the saying of our Lord, that "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."[1] To this decision he adhered with inflexible resolution during his long life of more than fourscore years and ten.

In his eighteenth year he came to Jerusalem — A.D. 457 — and even at that early age desired to lead the life of an anchorite. He was rejected by Euthymius, the abbot of a monastery somewhere

[1] Luke ix. 62.

in this region, on account of his extreme youth; and subsequently he went to Egypt, where he met his parents. The father had assumed the name of Conon, and had risen to an important command under the government. As was natural, he endeavored to withdraw his son from monastic life, but failed; and Saba after a time accompanied Euthymius into the wilderness near the Jordan, and then into the region south of the Dead Sea.

In his forty-fifth year he retired to a cave in the clefts of the Kidron, and commenced to found his own convent. A convent with a certain number of surrounding cells and anchorite caves was then called a Laura; and this one of Saba received the name of Magna Laura, owing to the number of anchorites attached to it, amounting to one hundred and fifty. On account of his ability, zeal, and sanctity, Saba became quite celebrated. He entered warmly into the current theological disputes of the day, and was a vehement opponent of Origen and his supposed Monophysite heresies. He was sent to Constantinople by the patriarch of Jerusalem, Elias I., in the hope of persuading the Emperor Anastasius to oppose the Monophysites, but did not succeed; and, in the disgrace that befell his own party, Saba was in great danger of being banished along with the patriarch Elias, who was exiled to Aila, at the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah. There Saba visited that aged patriarch, in A.D. 518, when he himself was about eighty years old.

The Emperor Justinian I., who succeeded Anastasius, recognized the Council of Chalcedon, and, according to the spirit of the times, persecuted the Monophysites; and Saba, though nearly ninety years old, was sent to publish in the cities of Palestine the imperial decrees. In his ninety-first year he again went to Constantinople, this time on a mission of charity and compassion. It appears that the Samaritans had committed great outrages, and ravaged the country to such an extent that the people were unable to pay their taxes, and Saba appealed to the emperor to have them remitted. In this mission he was entirely successful, and the taxes were remitted.

It is very pleasant to find this old theological belligerent closing his checkered career in such a truly benevolent work. He died in peace in the ninety-fourth year of his life, and was buried in his

own convent, the Magna Laura, and there we examined his tomb this morning. The convent of Santa Saba, called by the natives Deir Mar Saba, has been plundered more than once, and its inmates are said to have been cruelly massacred; but it has never been destroyed. It is reputed wealthy, and is held in high veneration by the entire Greek community. Its founder was a man of great energy and unwearied activity. "He acted an important part in that turbid period of ecclesiastical history, and fearlessly threw himself into agitations arising from the great Monophysite schism; nor did age seem either to have diminished his ardor or restricted his exertions."[1]

'Ain es Sultân, April 23d. Evening.

The tent never was more welcome to me than at the close of this long day's ride. I am glad we have taken it, but do not wish to repeat it.

The reasons for this unusual weariness are that we have actually been in the saddle more than twelve hours, and then the greater part of the day and of the ride has been in the depressed and hot region of the Dead Sea. The fact is, our visit is nearly a month too late both for pleasure and health. But the fatigue is over, and we may now review at our leisure this interesting excursion.

Amongst the multiplicity of sights and scenes which drew my attention hither and thither in rapid succession, only a few points have impressed their features upon my memory. In the morning I climbed to the top of the tower of the convent of Santa Saba, on the south of the ravine. From there my eye roamed over a wilderness of rusty brown hills, the most dreary and blasted that I ever beheld. Beyond and below it was the Dead Sea, bordered on the east by the abrupt cliffs of Moab. Turning to what was beneath, the wonderful chasm of the Kidron struck me with amazement. We have seen nothing so profound or so wild in all our travels.

The ride from Santa Saba to the Dead Sea you surely cannot have forgotten, nor the path along the perpendicular cliffs of Wady en Nâr—Valley of Fire—as the wonderful gorge of the Kidron is called, nor the long descent into and ascent from it, nor the barren hills over which we toiled in the broiling sun for seven hours, fre-

[1] Smith's Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Biog.

quently losing the path amidst tangled ravines and shelving gullies washed out of sand-hills; nor will you cease to remember the gallop over the plain after we had escaped from the perplexing net-work of wadies.

I remember, also, attempting to shelter my head from the burning sun under a stunted juniper-tree at lunch-time.

And in your disappointment you said that if Elijah's juniper afforded no better shade, it was not at all surprising that he requested for himself that he might die.[1] And certainly those straggling bushes cast but a doubtful shade at all times, and lend no effectual protection against such a sun and wind as beat upon us in that wilderness. Still, the prophet slept under one, and the Bedawîn do the same when wandering in the desert, where they often furnish the only shelter that can be found. Job has a curious reference to this tree in the thirtieth chapter of his remarkable dialogues. He says that those contemptible children whose fathers he would have disdained to set with the dogs of his flock, flee into the wilderness, and for want and famine "cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper-roots for their meat."[2] These mallows are a coarse kind of greens, which the poor boil as a relish for their dry bread. I have often seen the children of the poor cutting them up under the hedges and by the bushes in early spring, so that this rendering seems natural and appropriate to us who reside in the country; and therefore I accept it without noticing the arguments of learned critics against it. What sort of juniper-roots can be used for food is more than I can discover or comprehend. They are excessively bitter, and nothing but the fire will devour them. Burckhardt found the Bedawîn of Sinai burning them into coal, and says that they make the best charcoal, and throw out the most intense heat. The same thing seems to be implied in Psalm cxx. 4, where David threatens the false tongue with "sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper." Perhaps the meaning of Job is, that the poor cut up mallows to eat, and juniper-roots with which to cook them. This would give a sense in accordance with the known use of these roots, and still preserve the connection with the food of the poor. The Arabic word is retem, the same as the He-

[1] 1 Kings xix. 4. [2] Job xxx. 4.

brew, and Forskâl calls it genista rætam. It is, therefore, a species of broom, and not that kind of juniper which bears the famous berries, and whose oil assists in the composition of certain varnishes. That tree is also found in the country, and under it you would have had less occasion to complain of the want of shade.

The unexpected appearance of Mount Hermon, towering to the sky far, far up the ghor to the north, afforded me a practical proof that Moses could also have seen it from the mountains of Moab; nor shall I soon forget the sombre and shadowy surface of the Dead Sea, nor the indescribable feeling of disappointment at the Jordan. While approaching it over that melancholy desert of soft, deep sand, I eagerly watched the line of willow-trees which you said marked out the tortuous course of the river, expecting it to burst on my delighted eyes at every turn; but not until we were actually on the very brink did I see water enough to fill a thimble, and when there it was hard to believe that what I saw was the whole Jordan. Finding, however, that it was, I endeavored to reconcile my previous anticipations with the ensmalled reality by noticing the rapidity of the current and the depth of the stream.

Your surprise and disappointment are quite natural; and though I have looked at the Upper Jordan a hundred times with pleasure and satisfaction, yet down here at Jericho I too am always disappointed. When boys, we used to sing with enthusiasm, "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," and supposed that it was as large as the Ohio at least, and stormy as the North-west Passage; and something like this must have been in the mind of Watts when he applied the word stormy to this river rambling over the low plain where everlasting summer abides. It is not an epithet which personal acquaintance would have suggested.

I begin to feel that there is more fancy than fact in the costume and drapery of many of our hymns; but that is allowable, perhaps. I found, however, that my traditionary notions in regard to matters of fact were about equally fanciful. What, for example, becomes of one's hereditary ideas of the celebrated fertility of the plain of Jericho? For many a mile northwards from the shore of the Dead Sea, and westwards from the banks of the Jordan, there is nothing but a most unprofitable extension of simmering sand, bare and

barren of everything except stunted thorn-bushes and ugly black lizards.

The day has been excessively hot, and, more than all, the cultivated part of the plain has just been shorn of its luxuriant harvests, and the vegetation elsewhere has entirely dried up, except the "summer crops," which are irrigated from 'Ain Hajla, the brook Cherith, and the fountain of Elisha. I have never seen this plain so entirely deserted as it is at present. Even the few inhabitants of Erîha have gone to other parts to labor, since their own harvests are already gathered. On my first visit the whole valley was lively enough, for I was one of several thousand pilgrims drawn hither from all parts of the world to bathe in the holy river Jordan.

This is a ceremony which we have missed, somewhat to my regret, as it was one of the scenes I had always associated with my intended visit to the Jordan.

Well, since you cannot see, the next best thing is to hear; and I will give you an account of my first visit to Jericho and the pilgrims' bathing-place. I came down from Jerusalem with the pilgrims, who were on that occasion unusually numerous, and my narrative will indicate the changes which have occurred in this part of the country during the last half century. Early in the morning of April 16th we left the convent of Archangel, and passed along the Via Dolorosa to the palace, where the guard was already in motion, and from thence, with the white flag of the pilgrim in front and the green of the prophet in the rear, we set forward. It was a merry hour apparently to everybody. Almost the whole population of the city, of either sex and of every age, arrayed in their best, lined the zigzag path along which the pilgrim host was to pass. With noise and pomp such as Arabs only can affect, we passed out at St. Stephen's gate, wound our way down into the narrow vale of Jehoshaphat, over the south point of Olivet, by the miserable remains of Bethany, the city of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and then prepared ourselves to descend, for, as you remember, one must go "down to Jericho." And, sure enough, down, down we did go, over slippery rocks, for a long way, when the path became less precipitous. Still, however, the road followed the dry channel of a brook several miles farther, as if descending into the very bowels of the earth.

After leaving the wady, which turns aside too far to the south, we descended a succession of barren hills for several miles, the prospect gradually becoming more and more gloomy. Not a house, nor even a tree, was to be seen; and the only remains are those of a large khan, said to have been the inn to which the Good Samaritan brought the wounded Jew. Not far from there, in a narrow defile, an English traveller, Sir Frederic Henniker, was attacked, shot, and robbed in 1820. As one approaches the plain, the mountains wear a doleful appearance, the ravines become more frightful, and the narrow passages less and less passable. At length the weary pilgrim reaches the plain by a long, steep declivity, and doubtless expects to step immediately into Jericho. But no city appears, and after a full hour's ride he pitches his tent, if he have one, in a dry, sultry plain of sand, sparsely sprinkled over with burnt-up grass. If he have no tent, a shrivelled thorn-bush is better than nothing; and if he cannot get that, let him do as we did—sit down under the burning sun, and bear it as well as he can.

Finding it intolerably hot, we passed through the camp of the pilgrims, and went on to the village of Jericho, about a mile distant, and took shelter under some fig-trees which grew around the sheikh's residence, a square, castle-like house, the only one of any size in the place, and where tradition says that Zaccheus—he of "little stature"—once dwelt. In the immediate vicinity were some forty or fifty of the most forlorn habitations that I have ever seen. And this was Jericho! The houses, or, rather, huts, were surrounded by a peculiar kind of impenetrable barrier, made of nŭbk, a species of bush very abundant in the plain. Its thorns are so sharp, and the branches so plaited together, that neither horse nor man can pass through it.

The Arabs of Jericho and the plain are many shades darker than the same class on the mountains only a few miles distant. This is easily accounted for by the great difference in climate.

After looking about the village, and riding a mile or two to the north-west to see this fountain of 'Ain es Sultân, we returned to the camp about sunset for protection. Having sung "The voice of free grace," and "There is a land of pure delight," we wrapped our cloaks about us and prepared to sleep; but the scenes of the day

and the circumstances with which we were surrounded were too novel and exciting to allow of sleep. East and west of us, in parallel lines, stretched the mountains of Moab and Palestine, like perpendicular walls reared to heaven by the Creator to guard this favored spot. A few miles to the east flowed the Jordan, the most interesting river on earth; to the south slept in mysterious silence the bitter waters of the Dead Sea; while under the surface of the plain were the mouldering ruins of old Jericho, whose walls fell prostrate at the blast of Israel's priests. What an assemblage of interesting objects! How well calculated to awaken deep and solemn reflection! There the swellings of the Jordan rolled back, that Israel's chosen race might take possession of the Promised Land;[1] and thus, when "on Jordan's stormy banks we stand," with the heavenly Canaan in view, if the ark of God be there, the angry billows shall flee away at the presence of Him who hath said, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."[2] There, too, the smitten Jordan parted hither and thither when the prophet of the Lord crossed over, and was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire;[3] and there we drank of the fountain which was sweetened by Elisha's cruse of salt.[4] There, also, our blessed Saviour was baptized, the heavens were opened, the Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove, and a voice from the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."[5]

About three o'clock in the morning there was a buzz in the camp, which in a short time became like the "noise of many waters," and at four precisely we set forward towards the Jordan, going to the south-east. A large company of guards went before, bearing on long poles flaming torches made of turpentine and old rags, which threw over the plain a flaring light, revealing double ranks of armed horsemen on either side of the host, careering in genuine Arab style, and plunging with fearless impetuosity through the grass and bushes to drive out any Bedawîn that might be lurking there. The governor, with his body-guard, brought up the rear, and thus we were defended on all sides. Nor was this caution mis-

[1] Josh. iii. 16. [2] Isa. xliii. 2. [3] 2 Kings ii. 6, 8, 11.
[4] 2 Kings ii. 19–23. [5] Matt. iii. 16, 17.

placed. One poor fellow from Poland, having fallen behind, was attacked, robbed, and stripped naked.

After a two hours' ride over an uneven plain, we reached the Jordan as the sun rose above the mountains of Moab. Immediately the pilgrims rushed headlong into the stream, men, women, and children, in one undistinguished mass. The haughty Turk sat upon his beautiful horse, and looked in scorn upon this exposure of the "Christian dogs." The pilgrims, however, were highly delighted with their bath. The men ducked the women somewhat as the farmers do their sheep, while the little children were carried and plunged under water, trembling like so many lambs. Some had water poured on their heads in imitation of the baptism of the Saviour, for it is part of the tradition that our blessed Lord was there baptized; and the ruins of an old convent near at hand determined the exact locality to the perfect satisfaction of the devout pilgrim. The Latins, however, maintain that the event took place higher up the stream, and hence they bathe there. The banks are nearly perpendicular, and very muddy, while the current is astonishingly rapid, and the river is at least ten feet deep. It required the most expert swimmers to cross it, and one less skilled would be inevitably carried away, as we had melancholy proof. Two Christians and a Turk, who ventured too far, were drowned without the possibility of rescue, and the wonder is that more did not share the same fate where multitudes were bathing at once. This sad accident, which should have cast a shade over the whole assembly, produced very little sensation amongst the pilgrims. In fact, this pilgrimaging seems to obliterate every benevolent feeling from the heart. When we left Jerusalem, the guard immediately in front of me, in careering and curveting with his horse, fired a pistol, and accidentally shot a woman dead, and yet I never heard the affair mentioned afterwards but with levity. As we came along, if any poor woman fell from her horse and rolled down amongst the rocks, it called forth only loud laughter from the passing crowd.

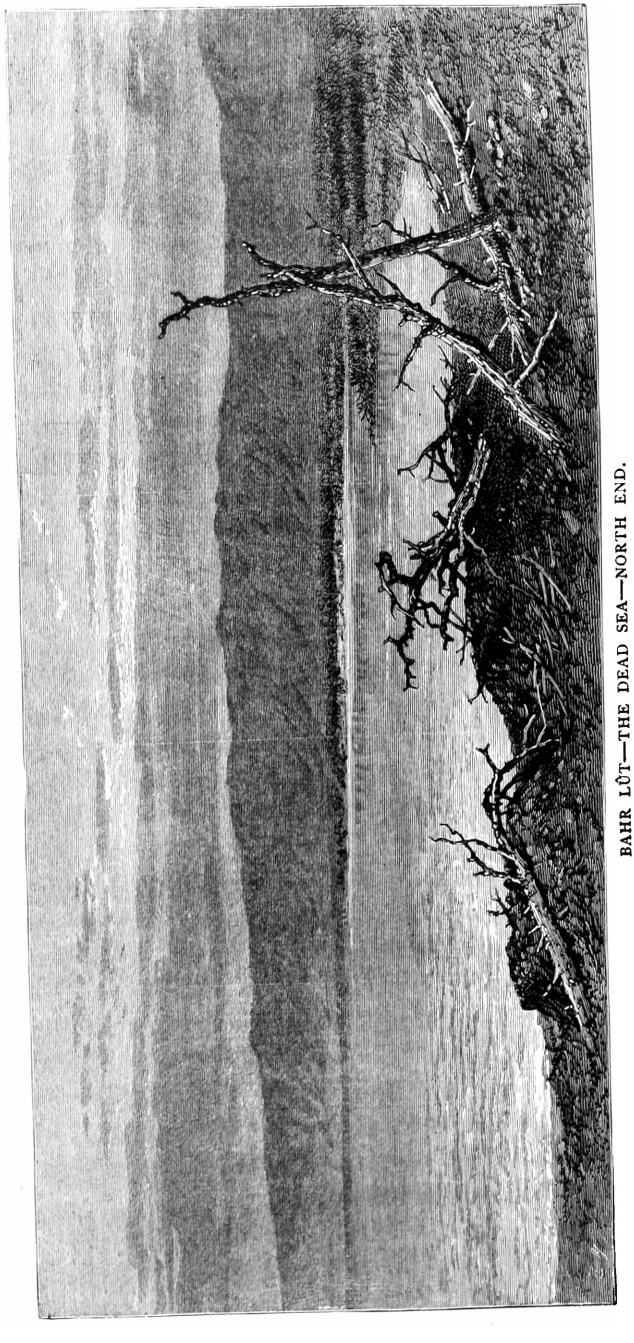
The Jordan would scarcely be dignified with the name of river, and its appearance is, in reality, quite insignificant. It is, however, deep, narrow, and very muddy, and hurries away to the sea with great velocity. In approaching the river one descends several ter-

races; and, though much swollen with the rains and the melting snows of Lebanon at that time, it was still fifteen or twenty feet below the bank on the western side. It has also a very winding course, having on one side a perpendicular bluff, and on the opposite a low flat beach covered with weeds, bushes, and drift, and these constantly alternate. These low flats vary in width, and at the bathing-place they were about twenty rods wide, and the whole surface had recently been inundated. These flats are the banks that were flooded when the Israelites passed over.[1] Nor was the miracle unnecessary. It would be impossible for such a host to cross the Jordan at that season of the year without either a bridge or a miracle, for boats, had there been any, could do nothing in such a current, and the river was too deep to ford. Travellers have differed widely in their description of the Jordan, principally from two causes—visiting it at different seasons of the year, and at different places. At the pilgrims' bathing-place, when and where I saw it, the width was at least thirty yards, and its depth ten feet.

After the pilgrims had bathed, we left them, and turned down to the south, with three or four English travellers, and a guard from the governor, to visit the Dead Sea; and, having ridden across plains of barren sand for an hour and a half, we stood upon the shore of that memorable lake. Without any reference to what others have said, I can testify to the following facts. The water is perfectly clear and transparent. The taste is bitter and salt, far beyond that of the ocean. It acts upon the tongue and mouth like alum, smarts in the eye like camphor, produces a burning, pricking sensation, and it stiffens the hair of the head like pomatum. The water has a much greater specific gravity than the human body, and hence I did not sink lower than to the arms when standing upright in it.

Half a century ago we were but partially acquainted with the phenomena of this region, and I was greatly surprised at the extraordinary buoyancy of the water. I ought to have known the fact, however, for Josephus not only states it, but, suo more, exaggerates it, as in the following description: "It bears up the heaviest things that are thrown into it, nor is it easy for any one to make things

[1] Josh. iii. 14, 15.



BAHR LÛT—THE DEAD SEA—NORTH END.

sink therein to the bottom, if he had a mind so to do. Accordingly, when Vespasian went to see it, he commanded that some who could not swim should have their hands tied behind them and be thrown into the deep, when it so happened that they all swam as if a wind forced them upwards. Moreover, the change of color in this lake is wonderful, for it changes its appearance thrice every day;"[1] with other marvels, such as "black clods of bitumen, resembling in shape headless bulls," etc., rising on the surface.

It must have been rare sport

[1] Wars, iv. viii. 4.

to that rough and callous-hearted emperor to see his victims tumbling about in this great caldron of bitter brine in helpless perplexity.

Josephus may possibly have witnessed the experiment himself, for he was then a prisoner of Vespasian, and was carried about with the Roman army; but from my own experience, I would not have been responsible for the lives of persons thus cast into this sea with their hands tied behind their backs. They would not sink to the bottom, but the feet have a very perplexing inclination to rise to the surface and send the head below it. By carefully controlling this pedal ambition, one might stand, sit, or lie all the day in or upon this liquid couch; but, as in the body politic, should the feet fairly gain the mastery, sinking the head below the surface, it might be difficult to restore the proper equilibrium. I remember being quite startled with a personal contest of this kind the first time I plunged into this strange sea.

Although there is evidence in the sand and brushwood thrown upon the beach that in great storms there are waves, still there is some foundation for the reports about its immobility. There was a considerable breeze, yet the water lay calm and motionless. We saw no fish nor living animals in the water, though birds were flying over it unharmed. All of us noticed an unnatural gloom, not upon the sea only, but also over the whole plain below Jericho. This, too, is mentioned by ancient historians. The atmosphere had the appearance of Indian summer in America, and, like a vast funeral pall let down from heaven, it hung heavily over the lifeless bosom of this mysterious lake. Having gathered some curious pebbles from the shore, and filled our cans with the water, we returned to the camp highly pleased with our excursion.

We spent the first part of the night in walking about the camp. The scene was very picturesque. Spread abroad over the plain lay men, women, and children, of almost every nation under heaven, of all languages, every variety of costume, and of all colors, from the black of Africa to the white of Poland. All denominations of this sectarian world were there—Muhammedans, Druses, Maronites, Catholics, Greeks, Armenians, Copts, Syrians, Jews, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and infidels, in one vast con-

gregation. The camp did not become quiet at all, and about midnight everything was again set in motion. We hastily mounted our animals to keep from being trampled underfoot, and, falling into line, set forward, with a long train of lights, towards the narrow pass down which we came the day before. A similar line of torches, about a mile to the south, marked out the course of another division of the host. The night was exceedingly dark, and, as we approached the defile leading up the mountain, the confusion became indescribable—women screaming in terror lest they should be trampled down by the long lines of camels coupled together; parents calling for their children, friends hallooing for friends; muleteers beating and cursing their animals to force them up the steep rocks, those above calling to those below; while the guards, stationed upon projecting rocks, kept up a constant discharge of musketry, whose lurid glare and hollow reverberations down the deep ravines startled the "leaden ear" of night, and rendered sublime what would otherwise have been ridiculous. Fairly up the mountain, we came in sight of the southern division of the pilgrims, and the prospect was grand beyond description. For miles the long train of torches rose and fell in graceful curves, corresponding to the hills and vales and the windings of the road over which they toiled, while the same discharge of fire-arms continued with even magnified effect. In about an hour the two lines united, and we hurried on to the Holy City, which we reached a little after sunrise, shivering with the cold wind of the mountains, but thankful that we had been permitted to perform this interesting tour in safety.

April 24th.

This region is now said to be unusually free from stray Bedawîn from the east of the Jordan, and we can pursue our rambles in all directions without fear of interruption. I never found it so on previous visits, and, indeed, the change for the better in this respect is very marked. For many years after my first visit to this fountain no one dared to encamp here, but now the tangled thickets of thorny nŭbk have been cleared away, and the white and green tents of travelling-parties are pitched almost daily during the season at 'Ain es Sultân. A large company of Germans arrived last night, and are encamped on the terraces north of the fountain. Some of

the gentlemen are already away amongst the trees and bushes to the east of us in search of game.

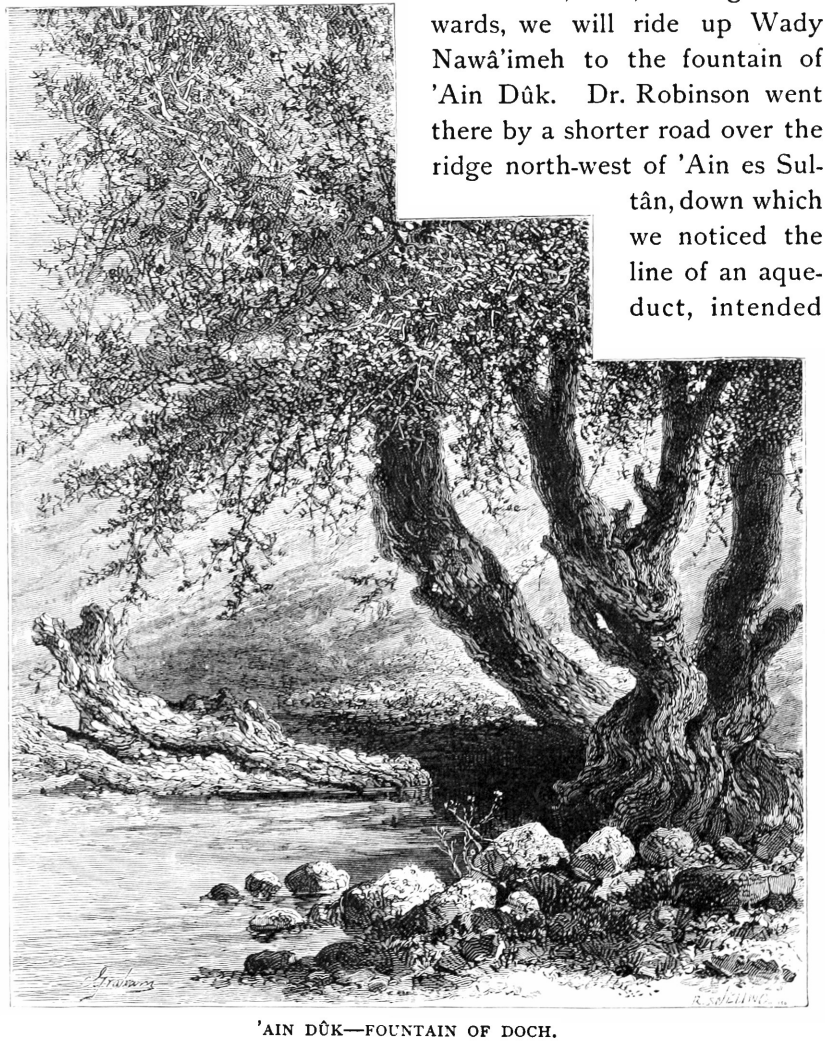
We are to devote this day to visiting some of the historic places on this plain which have rendered it memorable from very early times.

As we ride along, I notice that vegetation stops with the limit of irrigation. There must have been a very extensive system of aqueducts to account for the extraordinary fertility of this region in ancient times.

There was a perfect net-work of canals, which conducted the water not only from Wady Kelt and 'Ain es Sultân, but also from other fountains farther north, and our first object this morning will be to visit the spring-head of two of these fountains.

Lieutenant Conder, in his report, says: "There are in all six springs from which the channels are fed, and twelve aqueducts. The springs are 'Ain el 'Aujeh, 'Ain Nawâ'imeh, 'Ain Dûk, 'Ain Kelt, 'Ain Fârah, and 'Ain es Sultân. From the first of these, situate about eight miles north of Erîha, a cemented channel follows the course of the Wady el 'Aujeh on the south side. On gaining the plain it crosses the valley and runs away north, having no less than five branches running about a mile from it at right angles, at intervals of a quarter to half a mile apart. There is no doubt that this is simply intended for irrigation. One branch leads to a mill. A second and far more important branch leaves the first aqueduct at about one and a half miles from its source. It winds away south in a very devious course for three and a half miles, when it reaches the two springs of 'Ain Dûk and 'Ain Nawâ'imeh, situate only a few yards apart. It crosses the valley on a curious bridge of many arches, all pointed, and apparently late or modern in date. From this point the aqueduct inclines eastwards, and follows a course equally undulating for upwards of four direct miles, passing through various cisterns by Khŭrbet el Mufjar, and over another bridge with pointed arches. A shorter aqueduct from 'Ain es Sultân joins this at Khŭrbet el Mufjar, and has pipes for the water-channel, instead of the cemented channel of the other. This devious course terminates at length at a birket called Haidar, a cemented cistern, the total length from el 'Aujeh to this point being over eight miles."

We need not attempt to follow out to the end this long and complicated system of aqueducts, which would lead us too far to the north; but, turning westwards, we will ride up Wady Nawâ'imeh to the fountain of 'Ain Dûk. Dr. Robinson went there by a shorter road over the ridge north-west of 'Ain es Sultân, down which we noticed the line of an aqueduct, intended



'AIN DÛK—FOUNTAIN OF DOCH.

to bring water to the sugar-mills, whose ruins are near our tents, and from thence distributed over the land farther to the south and east. The distance from 'Ain Dûk to the mills is about three miles.

Our ride of an hour has brought us to these fountains, for there are two, that of 'Ain Dûk and 'Ain Nawâ'imeh, flowing out from the south side of Wady Nawâ'imeh, and they are more copious than that of 'Ain es Sultân. The water from them, now that the aqueduct is out of repair, flows down the wady eastwards.

How great the changes that have passed upon all this region! These quiet fountains, which now pour forth their abundant streams in solitude and unobserved, must have witnessed stirring scenes in the olden times, when Israel's warriors crowded around them to quench their thirst, as "they fled from before the men of Ai." It was probably over the rough mountains above, and through this rugged ravine of Wady Nawâ'imeh, that "there went up" against Ai "about three thousand men," and down this same wady they fled in dismay, chased by the men of that city, for this would be the direct route to the camp at Gilgal. Up this same wady, again, I suppose, and Wady el 'Aujeh, the main army marched for the second attack, when "Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valor, and sent them away by night," to "lie in wait against the city."[1] It was by this same route, also, that "Joshua ascended and went up from Gilgal by night," in swift response to the appeal for help from the Gibeonites; and he came upon their enemies suddenly, and utterly routed them.[2] Wady Kelt offered the shortest road to Gibeon from Gilgal; but that would have brought the army of Joshua too near Jerusalem, then, and for centuries afterwards, the stronghold of the Jebusites.

One needs only to pause and reflect long enough to comprehend the significance of that rapid night march for the relief of Gibeon, the morning battle, and the victories of the succeeding day, to understand in some measure the meaning of God's previous dealings with the Hebrew nation. It was by the severe discipline of the forty years of wandering in the great and terrible wilderness that a race of stalwart warriors was trained up capable of conquering Canaan. The night march to Gibeon must have been over rugged and difficult mountains, a distance of thirty miles; and the subsequent pursuit of the Canaanites, upon the same day, to Makkedah

[1] Josh. vii. 2–6; viii. 3, 4. [2] Josh. x. 6, 7, 9, 10.

and to Libnah, was at least thirty miles farther. No modern army, even under the pressure of utmost urgency, could achieve what these heroes of Israel did on that ever-memorable day. Nor could they have done it without a life-long training by such a leader as was Moses, and under conditions which fitted them to endure an amount of toil and fatigue almost incredible. The life in the wilderness was the necessary antecedent to the conquest of the Holy Land, and the two things should be contemplated together.

Travellers now frequently pass up Wady Nawâ'imeh, in the direction of Ai, on their way to Bethel, and thence to Jerusalem, or continue their journey northwards; but, apart from its savage wilderness, that route has little to recommend it. Dr. Robinson thus describes the character of the scenery after having overcome the first steep ascent from 'Ain Dûk. He says:

"The way now became in general less steep, though we still had to climb occasionally sharp ascents, and pass along the brow of fearful precipices. On our right the Wady Nawâ'imeh occupied the bottom of a broad, sunken tract, composed of chalky mountains rising on each side, presenting only the aspect of a terrific desert. All around we could see nought but waves of naked, desolate pyramidal and conical mountains, with deep wadies between, marked only by the narrow tracks of goats, which climb along their sides to crop the few herbs thinly sprinkled over them. It was one of the most truly desert spots we had yet visited. The path led us along the tops and sides of declivities as nearly perpendicular as they could be without being composed of solid rock."[1]

This is very strong language for so imperturbable a traveller as Dr. Robinson.

But there is no exaggeration in it. I have myself had more than one scramble along the most impracticable paths imaginable, and many of the ravines in this neighborhood are absolutely impassable.

Has 'Ain Dûk any history aside from its connection with the events in the days of Joshua which you have just mentioned?

Not the fountain, but near it are traces of substructions, though not very distinct, the remains, doubtless, of the ancient castle of

[1] Rob. Res. vol. i. p. 572.

Doch, near Jericho, in which Simon Maccabæus and his two sons, Mattathias and Judas, were treacherously slain by his son-in-law Ptolemy at the close of a great banquet, after they "had drunk largely," as related in the last chapter of 1 Maccabees.

How far is it from 'Ain Dûk to the Jordan? Could we not pass over the river, and examine some of those low banks which are said to be overflowed?

The distance is between eight and ten miles, over a level plain, with nothing to prevent our taking the most direct course thither. We will therefore postpone the examination of the aqueducts connected with 'Ain es Sultân and those farther south, and go from this fountain to the Jordan ford of Nawâ'imeh, where is a ferry-boat and a shop. We can rest there and take our lunch, as well as refresh ourselves with a cup of black coffee.

What is the name of that lofty conical peak which dominates the valley and plain to the north of us?

Kŭrn Sŭrtabeh, horn of Sŭrtabeh, and it well deserves the name. We shall have something more to say about it when our pilgrimage brings us into that neighborhood. Lieutenant Conder locates there the site of the great altar of Ed, which the two and a half tribes erected "for a witness," when they returned home after the conquest of Palestine. The whole account of the building of this altar is found in the twenty-second chapter of Joshua.

Is the entire plain of the Jordan so barren and deserted as this part over which we are now riding?

With slight exceptions, it is for about twenty miles northwards, and there are many circumstances which imply that it was always so. I never could understand why it was called desert or a wilderness in the accounts of the baptism by John, and later by Josephus, until I had traversed it from the Dâmieh ford to Jericho. After crossing Wady el Fâri'a just below the ferry of Dâmieh, I could not obtain a drop of water until I reached 'Ain es Sultân, six hours' rapid riding. The whole plain is either absolutely bare or overrun with a tangled mass of low bushes impossible to penetrate. Nor does it appear ever to have been cultivated in that direction. A few spots around the débouchure on the plain of wadies present very limited exceptions, but the plain itself is strictly a wilderness.

The river retires far to the eastward, and the only variation in the dreary monotony of the way was when we had to make detours westwards to get around deep gullies leading down towards the Jordan which must be at least two hundred feet below the general level of the plain. From no point in that long ride of twenty miles could the river be seen.

Those descending gullies you mention begin to appear on our left, and the path bears away southwards, to avoid them, I suppose.

We shall soon get into the regular road from Jericho to the ford; and as it is the highway to es Salt and the surrounding regions of Moab, it is well travelled, and we shall find no difficulty in threading our way through the labyrinth of bluffs and ravines.

Many of them present a very curious appearance. Yonder, on our left, is one that looks like a tower capped by a rough projecting roof.

There are many similar bluffs, and in fact they present the most characteristic feature along the line of the river for twenty miles. Their peculiar shapes are easily accounted for and explained. The surface of the plain consists of calcareous marl, the top of which is in many places so indurated as to resist the action of rain and wind; while all below is worn away in the direction mostly of the river-bank, leaving buttresses barely sufficient to sustain the top. This ultimately gives way also, and the superincumbent masses come crashing down in wild confusion. But here is a lad from the ford of Nawâ'imeh who will take charge of our horses while we rest and refresh ourselves under the trees near the hut erected for the men who manage the boat. The existence here of even this dilapidated ferry indicates a great advance in the line of improvement for this region. These peaceable boatmen take the place of the robbers who formerly infested the banks of the Jordan, and their presence as well as their occupation furnishes our best guarantee of safety. One of them will accompany us in our ramble on the other side of the river, to pilot us through the thickets of the low flat banks.

I cannot yet get reconciled to the fact that this is the Jordan flowing quietly at our feet, the river I have so often longed to behold. I am almost sorry I have seen it, the reality falls so very far short of the picture which imagination drew.

Yes, this is the Jordan; and thus its turbid stream rolls on between the green fringe of the willow, the sycamore, and other trees and bushes, alternating from side to side, from bluff to shoal and shoal to bluff, flowing on to

Where the waters of the Dead Sea sleep.

Lieutenant Lynch says that a short distance above that sea it was forty yards wide and twelve feet deep, then fifty yards wide and eleven feet deep, then eighty yards by seven feet, and finally one hundred yards in width, and upon the bar it was only three feet deep. Thus this impressive type of human life, and very much besides, sinks into the Sea of Death, and disappears forever.

But I hear the voices of the boatmen; they have got ready the boat to ferry us across, so let us hasten and pass over Jordan to the other side.

This excursion to the east of the Jordan and our walk over the low flats on the opposite banks brought us to several places which retain unmistakable evidence that they have been recently overflowed, and this is all I expected to find. Of itself, however, this does not explain the statements in the Biblical account of the crossing of the Jordan by the Israelites.

While seated here on the banks of the river itself, it will be quite appropriate to go over this important subject, and examine into those Biblical statements that need explanation.

Amongst the stupendous miracles that have rendered this neighborhood illustrious, the most wonderful and the most suggestive was undoubtedly the passage of the Hebrew nation through the Jordan to their promised inheritance. The twelve stones that bore witness to the fact have long since disappeared, and even the precise spot where the passage was made is a matter of dispute; and in view of the superstitious abuses to which such sites are perverted, I am contented to have them all thus hidden, as was the sepulchre of Moses. We have the hills of Moab on the other side; the river itself that was divided; the sea, into which the water, cut off from above, subsided; and Jericho, over against which the grand miracle was performed; and these are enough for the confirmation of our faith.

It is said in Joshua iii. 15, that "Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest." This is the statement, and the objections against its accuracy and truthfulness are, that the Jordan is a short and rapid river whose floods soon run out, and that, therefore, it could not have overflowed all its banks in harvest, for the rains have then entirely ceased, and the tributaries of the river are dried up. This plausible reasoning is strengthened by the unqualified assertion that the Jordan does not overflow its banks at all, not even in the rainy season.

To meet and refute these assertions various suppositions and suggestions have been put forward by the friends of revelation. Some have maintained that the channel of the river has been deepened since the time of Joshua, and this is, indeed, very probable; and again, that, from various causes, less water now falls upon the country drained by the Jordan than did anciently, and that the rains cease earlier in the spring. This may be true also, and if there was any need of such hypothetical assistance to establish the veracity of the sacred historian, we should not hesitate to employ it; but I am persuaded that the matter in question needs no such aid. It is a plain, honest statement of a simple fact, as literally true when Joshua led the ransomed tribes into Canaan as now. All we need in order to clear the passage from obscurity or doubt is an adequate acquaintance with the phenomena of the country and the river. Subject the passage and the scenery to a careful scrutiny and analysis, and we shall find that here, as in numberless other places, the Land illustrates and confirms the Book.

The river overflows during harvest; but where was the harvest spoken of, and what is the time of it? These inquiries are strictly essential. I have visited the pilgrims' bathing-place, the supposed scene of this miracle, early in April, and found barley-harvest about Jericho already ended. I also found the river full to the brim, and saw evidence in abundance that it had overflowed its banks very recently. Barley-harvest in the vale of the Lower Jordan begins about the end of March. This seems early, and in fact it is long before the crops are ready for the sickle on the neighboring mountains, or even around the fountains of the Upper Jordan. But the reason is obvious. The valley at Jericho is thirteen hundred feet below

the level of the sea, is sheltered from cold winds on all sides by mountains of great height, and is open to the warm southern breeze from the basin of the Dead Sea. It has, therefore, the climate of the tropics, though in the latitude of Jerusalem.

Still, the rains are over, and most of the tributary streams have dwindled down to inconsiderable rills, even at this early season of the year; and how comes it, therefore, that the Jordan alone is full to overflowing?

This is easily explained. The Jordan does not depend upon such tributaries for its steady supply of water, but is almost wholly formed and fed by certain great fountains, which arise far north, around the base of snowy Hermon. The largest of these is called el Leddân, at Tell el Kâdy; the next in size is at Bâniâs. These are the two great sources mentioned by Josephus under the names Greater and Lesser Jordan. The stream from Tell el Kâdy is about three times as large as that from Bâniâs, and its course is south, a little west, through the plain of the Hûleh, for about five miles, where it is joined by the Bâniâsy, and, about a mile farther south, by the Hasbâny. The Jordan is thus formed by the union of these three streams, and, winding southwards through extensive marshes, flows into Lake Hûleh—the Merom of Joshua. The Hasbâny is a beautiful river, whose farthest permanent source is near Hâsbeiya, some eighteen miles north of Tell el Kâdy. The torrents from Wady et Teim greatly augment its size in the rainy season, but it depends for its permanent volume of water upon three fountains—the Fauwâr, at Hâsbeiya; the Seraiyib, below Kefr Shûba; and the Luweizâny, at el Ghŭjar. To complete the account of the sources of the Jordan, the fountains of Derdârah, in Merj 'Ayûn, and er Ruahiny, must be mentioned, and also those of Belâtah and el Mellâhah. It is not necessary to notice the river Jermŭk, nor the fountains which flow directly into the different lakes, nor the Zerka. Those we have named are sufficient for the purpose of our illustration. The Jordan is thus mainly made up from the joint contributions of great permanent springs and several tributary streams of considerable size, and in this fact we find the explanation of the overflow of the river so late in the season as March. These large fountains do not feel the effects of the early

winter rains at all. It requires the heavy and long-continued storms of mid-winter before they are moved to any considerable extent; and it is not until the melting snows of Hermon and Lebanon, and the heavy rains of the season, have penetrated through the mighty masses of these mountains, and filled their hidden chambers and vast reservoirs, that the streams gush forth in their full strength. These fountains continue to pour forth their contributions for months with undiminished volume. The Hûleh—marsh and lake—is first filled, and then the Gennesaret rises and pours its accumulated waters into the swelling Jordan; and the river keeps full and strong all through March into April. Thus it comes to pass that the Jordan does actually "overflow all his banks during all the time of harvest."

To understand the passage correctly, we must also remember that the Jordan has two series of banks, and in some places three, but it is the lower only which are overflowed, and to these the reference in Joshua is unquestionably made. The low flat, or river bottom, thus inundated is nowhere very wide, and is generally covered with a thick jungle of willow, sycamore, and other trees. It was from these thickets that "the swellings of Jordan," in ancient days, expelled the lion from his lair: a poetic allusion, which bears incidental testimony to the historic statement. At present there are no lions to be roused, but the wild-boar, the jackal, and the wolf occupy his place, and, like him, flee before the swellings of this river.

I think it not improbable that the rise and fall of the Jordan are, in reality, somewhat earlier now and more rapid than in the days of Joshua. The cutting off of the forests of Lebanon, and especially of Hermon, about the sources of the Jordan, has produced a marked change in the time and amount of the rainfall. The rains are more violent, more of the water runs immediately away, the snow also dissolves earlier in the season, and the clearing away of much of the marsh at the north end of the Hûleh allows the water a quicker passage to and through the lake. All these causes combined have no doubt tended to make the Jordan rise earlier, and continue in flood a shorter time than was the case three thousand years ago. It is also highly probable that the river has some-

what deepened its channel, especially near the Dead Sea, where its very rapid current would naturally have that effect. And thus the extent of the overflow may now be less than in ancient times. It must be remembered, also, that, in accordance with Oriental idiom and the modus loquandi of Moses, Joshua, and other historical writers, such general formulas as the one under consideration were not intended to be interpreted with mathematical exactness, and should not be pressed to their utmost possible meaning. What Joshua doubtless meant to record was the fact that when a way was miraculously opened for Israel to pass over to Canaan the river Jordan was full to overflowing. And it is certainly remarkable that after thirty centuries we can stand on the banks of this river near to the spot where the event occurred, and verify the substantial accuracy of the statement.

There are some interesting sites to examine on our way back to 'Ain es Sultân, and the first of these is 'Ain Hajla—Beth-hoglah. It would take us too far down the river to visit Kŭsr el Yehûd—castle of the Jews—as the ruins of the convent of St. John the Baptist are now called by the Arabs. It must have existed before the time of Justinian; for Procopius, a contemporary of that emperor, ascribes to him the construction of the large cistern, now visible in an almost perfect condition, at the convent. It is thirty feet deep, and supported on rows of piers. It was supplied with water from 'Ain es Sultân by an aqueduct which appears to have been an open canal with banks of earth on each side, and brought in a straight line from that fountain to the convent, a distance of nearly eight miles. The convent was destroyed in the twelfth century, but was rebuilt soon after; and the ruins now seen may date from that period. "The most remarkable point about the building is the use of an apparently artificial stone, containing flints and fragments of harder stone. The chapel is subterranean; the outer stones are drafted; fragments of tesselated pavement remain, and some inscriptions or graphitæ, carved on the walls. This famous establishment, with the small chapel on the banks of the Jordan belonging to it, are mentioned by almost every traveller of mediæval times; and the 'fair church of St. John the Baptist' was still standing when visited by Sir John Maundeville in 1322, but ruined before the year 1697."

There were about half a dozen other convents in this region, most of them undoubtedly ancient. Indeed, from the early part of the fourth century this plain became a favorite resort of pilgrims from all parts of the Christian world.

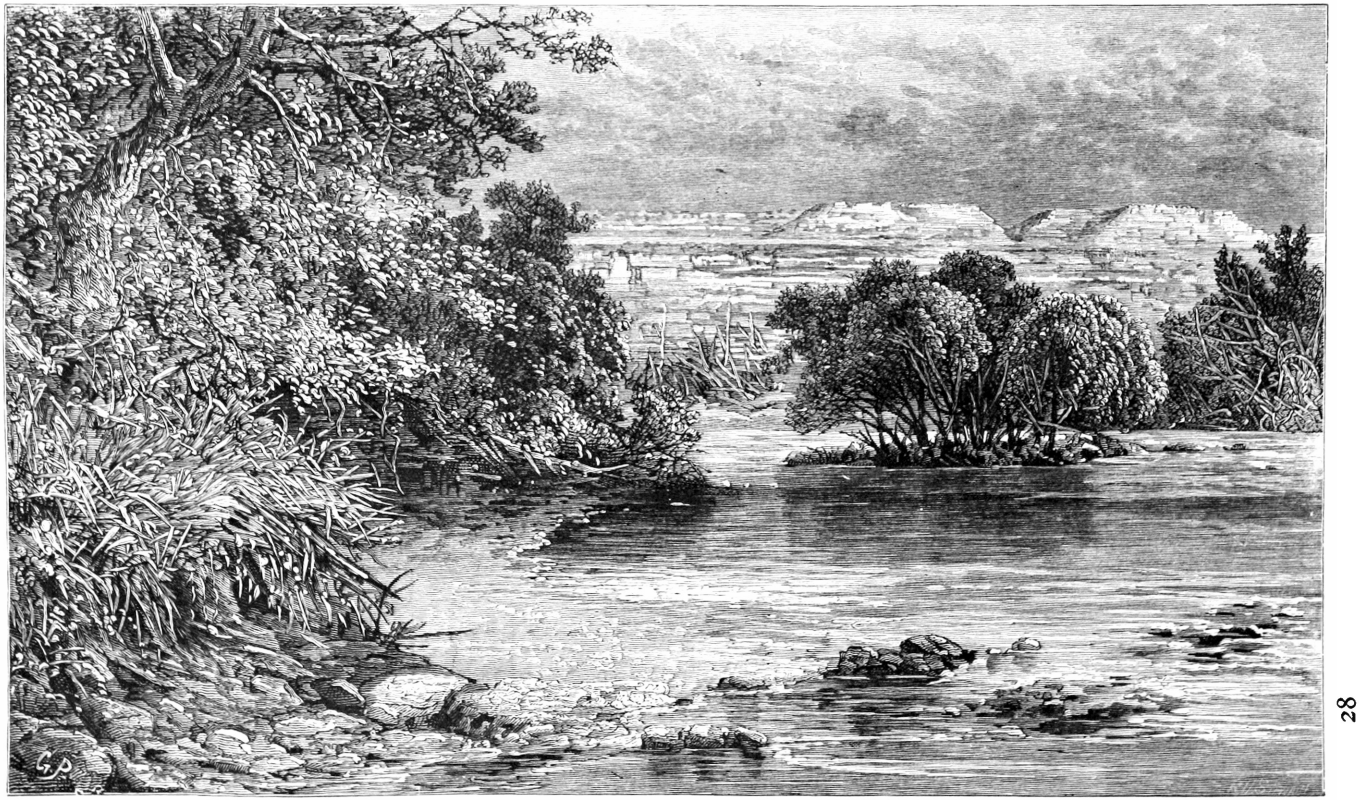
Do you think that the custom of bathing in the Jordan at the place where the baptism of the Saviour was supposed to have been performed commenced at that early date?

Probably it did, though I am not acquainted with the history of the origin of such a custom. It may have been introduced gradually, but once established, it would soon become extremely popular.

The two traditionary sites — that of the Latins near Kŭsr el Yehûd, and that of the Greeks a little farther down the river—are believed to mark the exact locality where our Lord was baptized; but it is probable that neither the one nor the other is at the identical spot. This general subject, however, deserves a careful examination, as does every incident in the life of Christ, and every place connected with the sojourn of the Saviour amongst men.

The baptism is mentioned by the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and, by implication, by John also.[1] From a careful consideration of the several passages, in their connection with the place of baptism, it seems more natural to seek for the locality farther north than any of the present sites. "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan," a journey of three days, at least, if the baptism occurred at either of the traditionary sites. It is quite possible, though scarcely probable, that Jesus made this long journey. The notice in Matthew, Mark, and Luke implies that immediately after the baptism and the temptation in the wilderness Jesus returned direct to Galilee. Considering the fact that Jesus was residing in Galilee, and reappears there after the baptism, I should look for the site of it as far up the Jordan valley as the ford of Dâmieh, since the most frequented road from Galilee to the river would lead him to that place, by the vale and brook that descends from the neighborhood of Sâlim. It could be reached in about a day and a half from Nazareth. "John was baptizing in Enon near to Sâlim," we are told, which is supposed to be somewhere east of Nâblus, and also at "Bethabara beyond Jor-

[1] Matt. iii. 13–17; Mark i. 9–13; Luke iii. 21, 22; John i. 29–34.



ESH SHERÎ'AH—THE JORDAN—PILGRIMS' BATHING-PLACE.

dan," apparently a ford across the river, also in that neighborhood.[1] These topographical indications, taken together, seem to suggest that the site of Christ's baptism was much nearer to Galilee than are the bathing-places of the pilgrims south-east of Jericho.

This theory leaves out one important incident connected with the baptism. All three evangelists associate the temptation with the baptism; and Mark, who is often the most accurate in details, says that "immediately [after the baptism] the spirit driveth him into the wilderness."[2] Those forty days of temptation must have intervened between the baptism and the reappearance of Jesus in Galilee.

But that throws no special light upon the place of the baptism. If it occurred near the Dâmieh ford, Jesus might have gone up at once into a mountain wilderness between there and Nazareth, quite as rugged and desolate as that of Quarantana, which tradition has selected as the scene of the temptation.

I see it stated by critics that Bethany, not Bethabara, was the true name of the place where John was baptizing.

In all the ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament the name is written Bethany; but Origen, who resided at Cæsarea Palestinæ, and therefore was well acquainted with the topography of this region, knowing that Bethany was near Jerusalem, a full day's journey from any point on the Jordan, changed the name to Bethabara. This word signifies house of passage, probably the name of a place at a ford over the river. Origen may have known that there was a ford bearing that name, and concluded that it was the place intended; or the name may have originally been written Bethabara, and this being a new and strange word not occurring in the Bible, some copyist in early times changed it, either designedly or by mistake, for the familiar name of Bethany; and as those copyists were foreigners, and therefore unacquainted with the topography of this region, the mistake, once introduced, was readily extended, and became general, until Origen felt the necessity of correcting it, and the translators of our own Bible have done the same. A similar mistake, I suppose, crept into ancient manuscripts in regard to the place where the herd of swine were drowned in the

[1] John iii. 23; i. 28.

[2] Mark i. 12.

Lake of Tiberias. Matthew, who resided on the shore of the lake, knew there was a village on the eastern side of it called Gergesa or Gerasa; and he accordingly speaks of the Gergesenes. The other evangelists may not have been acquainted with this small place, but both they and those for whom they wrote were familiar with the name of Gadara, the capital city of that region, and therefore they mention only the Gadarenes.

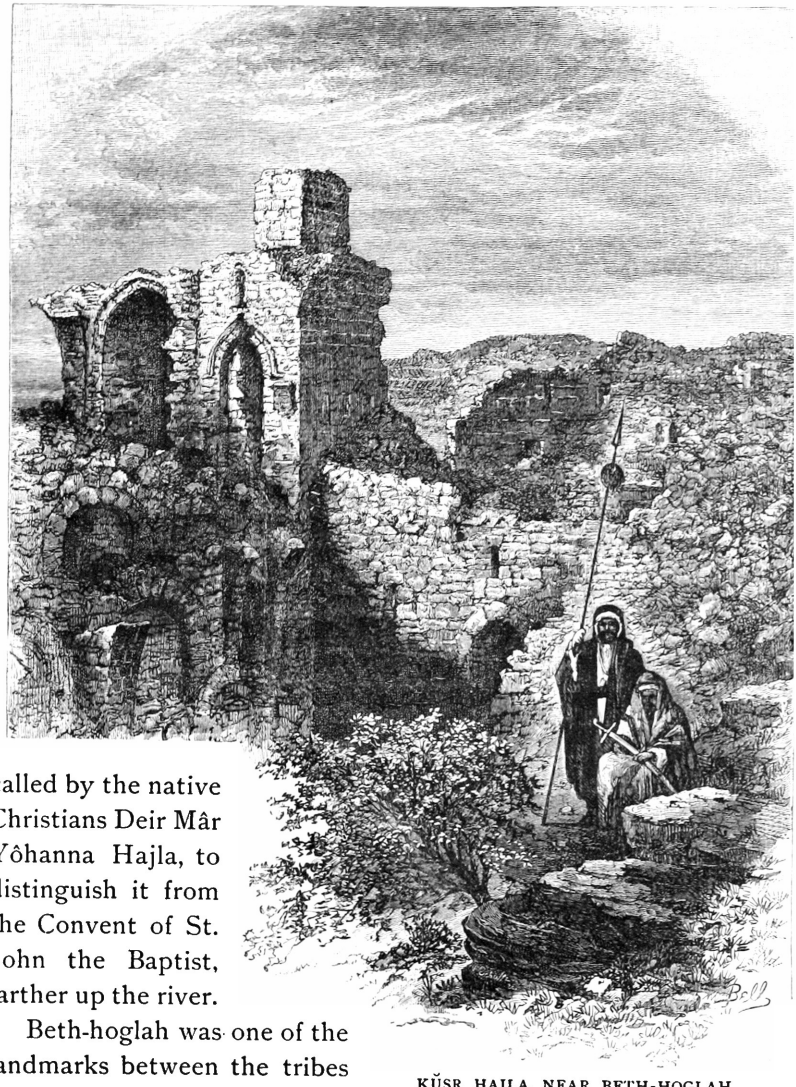
Future research may discover a Bethany or a Bethabara somewhere on the Jordan, answering to the place where John was baptizing; and the suggestion of Van de Velde, who supposes that Bethabara is identical with Beth-barah, the place where the Ephraimites "took the waters" and fell upon the routed Midianites, deserves careful consideration.[1] That place was probably at or near the ford of Dâmieh, and not too far to the north to accord with the narratives of our Lord's baptism.[2]

Lieutenant Conder finds a ford over the Jordan, called Mukhâdat el 'Abarah, one mile north of the mouth of Wady Jâlûd, and a day's journey farther north than the Dâmieh ford, and is inclined to adopt that as the site of Bethabara where John was baptizing. This would answer well in reference to the distance from Nazareth, but it would place the site of the baptism in Galilee. Indeed, Wady Jâlûd lies north of both Judæa and Samaria, and belongs to Galilee; and it is nearly three days' journey from this part of the Jordan valley, and could not have been the place to which "Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan," resorted to John to be baptized.[3]

But here we are at 'Ain Hajla, a beautiful fountain of sweet water, enclosed by a circular wall of masonry. It sends forth a stream in the direction of the Jordan which gives life to a green tract below. Its waters are regarded by the Arabs as amongst the best in this entire region. No ruins are seen about the fountain, but the name is the same as that of Beth-hoglah, on the boundary of Judah; and the site of that place may have been nearer Kŭsr Hajla, which probably derived its name from this fountain.[4]

It will take us about half an hour from here to Kŭsr Hajla,

[1] Judg. vii. 24.
[2] Van de Velde, vol. ii. p. 271, 343.
[3] Matt. iii. 5.
[4] Josh. xv. 6.



KŬSR HAJLA, NEAR BETH-HOGLAH.

called by the native Christians Deir Mâr Yôhanna Hajla, to distinguish it from the Convent of St. John the Baptist, farther up the river.

Beth-hoglah was one of the landmarks between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and from the fifth verse of the fifteenth chapter of Joshua it appears that the starting-point of the border-line was from the entrance of the Jordan into the Dead Sea. This is one of the few notices that indicate the curious and apparently erratic course in which those boundary-lines between the tribes were originally drawn.

The remains of this Kŭsr, castle or convent, are extensive and quite surprising, and one does not expect to come upon such a striking object here in this lonely desert.

It took Lieutenant Conder two days to complete his measurements and plans of this place, and he justly styles it the ruins of a fine old religious fortress. Its vaults and the greater part of the large chapel remain almost entire, while the smaller one is nearly perfect. Even some of the frescoes and inscriptions, though much defaced, are still visible; but the faces have been purposely erased. Lieutenant Conder found the name of John Eleemon, patriarch of Jerusalem in 630, attached to a figure; but it does not necessarily follow from this that the edifice was erected at that period. It is interesting, however, to meet with evidence that at least some of these convents date from an age so early in Christian history. "Tessellated pavement is found in fragments. The kitchen is entire, with its row of little ovens. Other cells, with a subterranean chapel, are covered with crosses and religious signs. The most curious frescoes are those representing saints receiving the white resurrection-robes from attendant angels. They are fresh in color, and, no doubt, later than those of Kŭrŭntŭl," the Quarantana.

The day is now far spent, so we will not be able to visit the site of Gilgal, east of Jericho, but be obliged to return direct to 'Ain es Sultân. Our course will lead us along the boundary between Benjamin and Judah for most of the way back.

Gilgal and Jericho, and the entire region over which we have ridden to-day, belonged to Benjamin. I have not realized that fact, probably because that tribe became a mere appendage of the kingdom of Judah.

The attempt to follow out in detail the borders of the different tribes is in most places hopeless, and the tribes themselves became, in course of time, practically obliterated by the intermingling of the people.

We will cross Wady Kelt at the low aqueduct which conducted the water to irrigate the gardens and the fields along the south bank of that wady, and make our way as best we can through the thorny thickets between us and the tents at 'Ain es Sultân, some two miles and a half distant.

April 24th. Evening.

No one can look upon the Dead Sea without thinking of the location of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other "cities of the plain" that were destroyed, and I should like to obtain more definite and satisfactory information on the subject than I at present possess. Since the exploration of this sea by Lieutenant Lynch, it has been supposed that the shallow part at its southern end, which is some fifteen miles long, was previously a plain, and that it was submerged at the time of the catastrophe. Admitting this to be true, how are we to understand what is said or implied—that the land there belonged to the valley of the Jordan, was watered by that river, and that therefore it was immensely fertile at the time when Lot chose it for his residence? "It was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar."[1]

It was the accepted opinion formerly that, previous to the destruction of Sodom, the Dead Sea was a fresh-water lake, and that its character was changed at that time by the obtrusion from below of rock-salt and other volcanic products, which have rendered it so extremely bitter and nauseous. The evidences of such action and obtrusion were found in the ridge of rock-salt called Jebel Usdum, at the south end of the sea, and in the presence of naphtha and bitumen in its waters. The lake, being originally shorter by the length of these plains of Sodom and Gomorrah, would necessarily rise, it was said, much higher during the rainy season than it does now; and the water being fresh, it would subside by evaporation, and perhaps by irrigation, much more rapidly than at present. The southern extension of the Dead Sea is thirteen feet deep in winter, but late in autumn it is only three, and is then forded not only by camels, but even by donkeys. The southern plain, on which the cities stood, it was supposed, was flooded by fresh water during the rise of the lake, just as the Nile floods the land of Egypt, and that when the water subsided the plain was sown, as Egypt was and is still. We have only to assume that this was actually the case at the south end of the Dead Sea, and that the inhabitants knew how

[1] Gen. xiii. 10.

to control the rising of the lake by embankments, as the Egyptians did the Nile, and the mystery about the fertility of that plain is explained.

Something like this was the former explanation; but a better acquaintance with the topography and physical characteristics of this region had led many modern writers to reject this entire theory, and to locate those doomed cities at the north end of the sea instead of the south end, and the reasons for this change appear quite conclusive.

To reverse a geographical theory so long and so universally entertained will require evidence and arguments very decisive indeed, and I should like to hear them.

They are partly geological, and have utterly rendered impossible the supposition that, until the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Jordan passed through the Dead Sea, then a sweet-water lake, and along Wady 'Arabah to the Gulf of 'Akabah. The geological changes demanded are too great to have occurred within the period of man's residence upon the earth; and it is admitted that the Dead Sea must have been substantially what it is now from a very remote period—an inland lake, with water intensely salt and bitter. In fact, the south end of this sea belongs to Idumea, and all the fertility seen at the south-east border of it is due to brooks that come down from the mountains of Edom. The Jordan never reaches those parts, nor is there a bush or blade of grass there that owes its life to the water of that river. The south end of the Dead Sea is not "the plain of Jordan" at all, and was never so regarded or so named either in ancient or modern times.

Turning now to the Biblical narrative, let us examine some of the statements which seem to necessitate the transfer of the site of the destroyed cities to the north or north-east end of the Dead Sea. And first, it appears to be certain, from Genesis xiii. 1–13, that at the time of the separation between Abraham and Lot they were at or near Bethel, some twelve or fifteen miles north of Jerusalem, and sixty or seventy miles from the south end of the Dead Sea. Lot, therefore, without a miracle, could not have seen that region at all, however high he "lifted up his eyes." The distance is too great, there is a haze over the sea which obscures the view, and,

finally, high mountains on the western shore entirely intercept the prospect. And, furthermore, it is evident that the region at the south end of the sea cannot be called the "plain of the Jordan" in any admissible sense; that plain stops at the north end. Moreover, Lot, when he separated from Abraham, is said to have "journeyed east;" whereas he must have gone to the south, if Sodom was at that end of the sea. These Biblical indications cannot be easily reconciled with the theory that places those cities at the south of this sea. But as the earliest distinct geographical intimations we have which locate the catastrophe at the south end are more than two thousand years later than the catastrophe itself, it is quite possible that during the long lapse of twenty centuries the actual site may have been lost; and when left to mere conjecture, the phenomena found at the south end would best accord, it was supposed, with the account of the overthrow, such as the wonderful cliff of rock-salt called Jebel Usdum, and the dreary and hopeless desert that spreads out across the south end of the sea, while general fertility characterized the region at the north end of it.

As the opinion early prevailed that the cities were submerged at the time of the catastrophe, and lay beneath the waters of the sea, the remarkable southern extension of it, only a few feet deep, would naturally suggest the idea that there was the site of those doomed cities; and whatever may be the truth in the matter, I think no one personally acquainted with the two ends of the sea can read the many incidental references in the Bible to the site of Sodom without feeling that these allusions apply far better to the south than the north end, and, further, that those who made them, be they prophet, apostle, or historian, accepted the current tradition as to the locality, and drew their pictures from that southern landscape. This is the impression produced by such passages as Deuteronomy xxix. 23; Jeremiah xlix. 18; 2 Peter ii. 6, and other similar notices, which speak of the site of Sodom as utterly waste, sown with brimstone and salt, abounding in salt-pits, the breeding-place of nettles, and a perpetual desolation. The writers, one and all, surely had their mind's eye, not upon the plain about Jericho, with its palm-groves and balsam-bearing gardens, nor upon the acacia thickets of

shittim on the east bank of the Jordan, which even now extend nearly to the shore of the sea, but upon the dismal salt desert at the south end of it.

The Biblical writers, however, refrain from giving distinct topographical indications by which we might locate the site, and the same holds true of the notices of Sodom in the Apocrypha. For though I cannot doubt that the author of the Wisdom of Solomon speaks of the south end, not the north, as "the waste land that smoketh, with plants bearing fruit that never come to ripeness, and a standing pillar of salt," yet he does not say so.[1] Josephus, also, says that "there are still the remainders of that divine fire, and traces of the five cities are still to be seen, as well as the ashes growing in their fruits. Which fruits have a color as if they were fit to be eaten, but if you pluck them with your hands, they dissolve into smoke and ashes," with a good deal of other extravagances about this sea and country which you will find in the fourth book of his Wars, at the end of the eighth chapter. Nor can there be a question as to the region which he had in view. We need not wonder, therefore, that all subsequent authors, down to Robinson, Lynch, Stanley, De Saulcy, and others, take for granted that the overthrown cities were located at the south end of the Dead Sea; and, indeed, the attempt to set aside such a tradition as this will be regarded by many as a case of unsustained critical presumption.

In conclusion, we must still be allowed to doubt that the submergence of the entire Lessan, at the time of the catastrophe, is a geological impossibility. Phenomena somewhat similar have occurred elsewhere within historic times, and the same is true in regard to the elevation of such cliffs as Jebel Usdum. Monte Nuova, north-west of Baiae, near Naples, was thrown up in a night, only a few hundred years ago, and there it stands as firmly as Jebel Usdum, and much higher.

It has been suggested that the geographical indications in Genesis may be explained as follows: The Hebrew word rendered plain in chapter xiii. 10–12, xix. 17, 25, 28, is ciccar, not the ordinary name for a level plain, but is an indefinite term, radically having reference to something circular, and may have then been a technical

[1] Wisdom x. 7.

term for the whole region around this sea, both north and south. And it seems to have been actually thus employed in Deuteronomy xxxiv. 3, in describing the extent of the vision of Moses from the top of Pisgah over the Promised Land. He saw the south, and the ciccar of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar. Now, if Zoar was at the north end of the Dead Sea, it would be in the immediate vicinity of Jericho, almost at the foot of Pisgah, and superfluous to say that Moses saw it; but if it was at the other end of that sea, it would imply a large extension of the survey in that direction.

Lot went east from Bethel to this ciccar, which he would naturally do in descending into "the plain of Jordan." How far he travelled in it before he came to Sodom, and in what direction, are details not mentioned. It is worth while, in this connection, to allude to a formula often employed by writers on this country, "the valley of the Jordan." It holds within its compass the three lakes —Huleh, Tiberias, and the Dead Sea. Ciccar may have had an equally extended application, and hence Lot would have been in the ciccar, though his residence was at the south end of the sea.

In Genesis xiii. 10, it is stated that, "before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah," the plain was "as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." Does not this imply that a terrible change had been effected by the catastrophe itself?

That would be true in any case, without reference to how it occurred; and you must remember that nowhere is there the slightest intimation that those cities were submerged. The agent employed in their destruction was not water, but its opposite—fire. I suppose that they were agricultural towns of no great size, built of unburnt brick, probably, and other materials still more perishable; and after the conflagration they must have presented an appalling spectacle of utter devastation—"the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."[1]

If at this end of the sea, and a few miles from Jericho, how do you account for the entire disappearance of the ruins?

There was but little left to disappear, and the débris of the

[1] Gen. xix. 28.

ruins would have long since been buried up by the shifting sand, too deep for their sites to be now visible. I am inclined to locate all those doomed cities on the other side of the Jordan, near the north-east corner of the Dead Sea. There is plenty of room for them there, and, curiously enough, in that vicinity are to be found the proper number of tells, or earth-mounds, required for the sites of the lost cities. Lot, we know, was on the east side of the Jordan after the catastrophe, and the little city Zoar to which he fled must have been on that side also; for he went up into the mountain above it, where his descendants, the Moabites and Ammonites, were found in succeeding times. We will visit that region hereafter, and examine those tells on the spot.

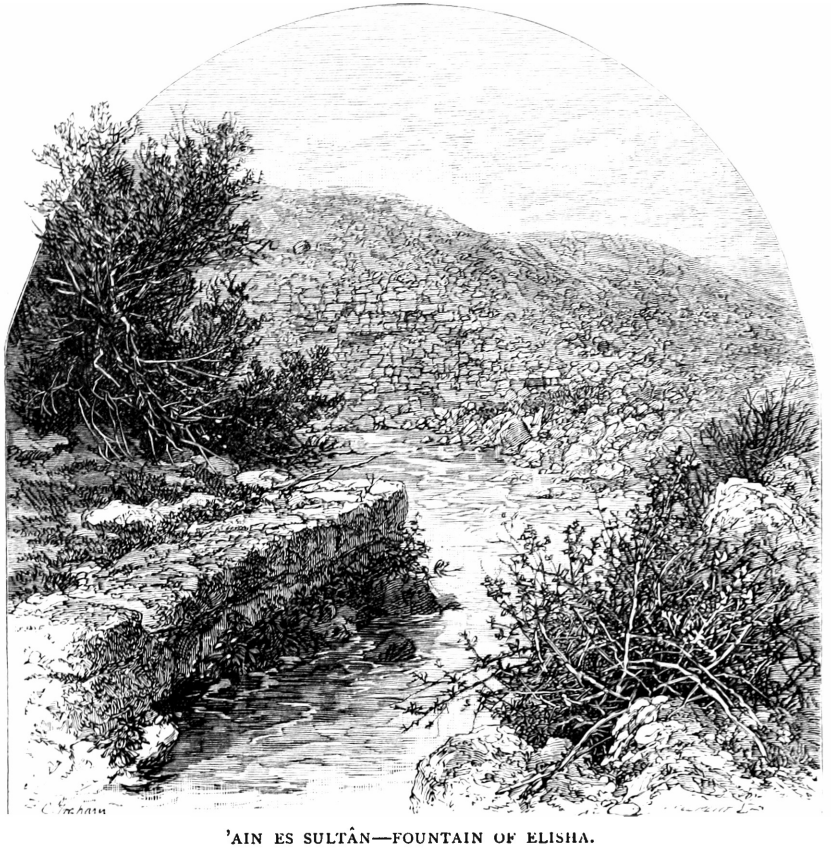
April 25th. Evening.

Our excursion to Erîha, as modern Jericho is now called, and Gilgal, and to the tells on both sides of Wady Kelt, have made me quite familiar with this immediate neighborhood; and as we leave this region on the morrow for Jerusalem, I wish to obtain more definite information regarding some of the places we visited. Ancient Jericho, "the city of palm-trees," around which cluster so many historic incidents of deep interest — was it at or near 'Ain es Sultân, and was this fountain included within the city limits?

The fountain may have been just outside the walls of the city, commanded and protected by the large irregular double tell above it. There seems to have been a reservoir around it, semicircular in shape, and constructed of hewn stones, from which the water was conveyed by aqueducts in various directions over the plain below; but these are now mostly broken, and the water meanders through the plain in various streams, giving life to broad tracts of nŭbk and other thorny trees and bushes.

At the intercession of the people of Jericho, Elisha healed the waters of 'Ain es Sultân by casting salt on them out of a new cruse, with the solemn declaration, "Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land;" and thus it has been from that day to the present hour.[1] And therefore I never look upon this fountain pouring forth its limpid brook of sweet water at the eastern base of the

[1] 2 Kings ii. 19–22.



'AIN ES SULTÂN—FOUNTAIN OF ELISHA.

mound, and sending its fertilizing streams through the glades below, without feeling assured that here is the true site of old Jericho. There are to be seen lines of buried walls and foundations, chiefly of unhewn stone, scattered over a considerable tract, and extending in some directions quite up to the fountain; but they are hardly distinct enough to be regarded as belonging to that ancient city.

On the double tell, beyond the fountain, are the débris of former structures, and of course it would be of surpassing interest should historic tablets be discovered there like those at Nineveh, but the excavations carried on by the Palestine Exploration Fund have revealed nothing of the kind; nor, considering all the circumstances,

is that surprising. There never were at Jericho any such tablets to be deposited; and the purpose for which these and numerous similar tells, in the Jordan valley and elsewhere throughout the country, were made remains still an unsolved mystery. Some of them, like this above 'Ain es Sultân, have a nucleus of crude brick as a foundation, and upon this has been heaped an earthen mound of great size. Others appear to be mere tells of gradually accumulated rubbish thrown out from an adjacent but long extinct town.

But wherever situated, the Biblical history of Jericho, though extending from the days of Moses to the time of Christ, is soon told. It is first mentioned in Numbers xxii. 1, in defining the place where the children of Israel encamped at Abel-shittim, on the plain of Moab. Again, in Deuteronomy xxxiv. 3, the name occurs amongst those of places seen by Moses in his survey of the Promised Inheritance, and there called "the city of palm-trees." For some time after the Hebrews entered Palestine, Jericho was the centre of their national life, and the details are recorded in the second, sixth, and seventh chapters of Joshua. The visit of the spies; the covenant with Rahab; the miraculous overthrow of the walls; the utter destruction of the city, and the curse pronounced by Joshua against him who should rebuild it; the sin and punishment of Achan — these are the leading incidents. After these events Jericho drops out of sight for more than four hundred years. Doubtless, there was a city in the neighborhood during all that time, for David appointed Jericho as the place of retirement for his messengers on their return from their mission of condolence to Hanun, king of the Ammonites. "Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown," implies that it was a place well known in that day.[1]

After the lapse of another century we read that "Hiel the Bethelite did build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun."[2] Not long after this Elijah, accompanied by Elisha, passed through Jericho on his way to the Jordan; and on the other side of that river he was taken up to heaven in a chariot of

[1] 2 Sam. x. 5. [2] 1 Kings xvi. 34.

fire, as related in the second chapter of 2 Kings. It seems strange to find that at that time there was a large school of the sons of the prophets in Jericho, that city over which hung the ominous curse of Joshua, and yet such was the fact.

In the twenty-eighth chapter of 2 Chronicles, there is an account of a unique incident connected with Jericho, which deserves to be held in perpetual remembrance. Pekah, the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, made war upon Judah, and besides slaying "one hundred and twenty thousand in one day," he carried away captive "two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and much spoil," and brought them to Samaria. But, influenced by the remonstrance of Oded, "a prophet of the Lord, the heads of the children of Ephraim stood up against them that came from the war, and said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the Lord already, ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel. So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation. And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria."[1] This is one of the most humane and beautiful actions to be found in the entire records of ancient or modern warfare, and reflects the highest honor upon the people of Samaria.

The next mention of Jericho is connected with the unfortunate and wretched Zedekiah, king of Judah, who, having been besieged in Jerusalem by the host of the king of Babylon for a year and six months, at last, on the breaking up of the city, fled from thence, he and all the men of war, by night. "And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah

[1] 2 Chron. xxviii. 5–16.

before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon."[1] Jericho is not again mentioned in the Old Testament, except incidentally by Ezra and Nehemiah. There were "of the children of Jericho three hundred and forty-five that went up out of the captivity" to Palestine from Babylon; and Nehemiah states the men of Jericho helped to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.[2]

Before losing sight finally and forever of Jericho and its suggestive surroundings, we must not forget the fact that our blessed Lord not only passed this way, but here wrought some of his miracles of love and mercy. I like to meditate upon such works on the spot where they were performed. Joshua said of the great stone which he set up under the oak at Shechem, "Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us."[3] In like manner these fountains and fields, these hill-sides and cliffs, may be said to have heard the words of Jesus, and witnessed his wonderful works.

After the long period of more than six hundred years Jericho reappears in the history of Christ, and he seems to have entered or passed through it twice at least. The city which existed at that time was probably located at or near the present village of Erîha; and though everything has greatly changed since Jericho was the flourishing "City of Palms," and the wealthy little Zaccheus climbed into the sycamore to get a sight of Jesus—palms, balm, sycamores, city, and inhabitants of old have all vanished—still the natural scenery remains the same; and amongst the few occupants of the place now you will notice more than one blind man, while all are beggars.

On the two occasions of our Lord's visit to Jericho he gave sight to the blind. In Mark x. 46–52, we read that, "as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging;" and in answer to his importunate supplication, "Jesus said unto him, Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." The case mentioned in the eighteenth chapter of Luke, verses 35–43, though resembling this, differs from it in several particulars; the

[1] 2 Kings xxv. 1–7; Jer. xxxix. 1–7.

[2] Ezra ii. 1, 34; Neh. iii. 1, 2.

[3] Josh. xxiv. 27.



BLIND BEGGARS BY THE WAY-SIDE.

only one we need to mention is that Jesus met the blind man before he entered Jericho, not when he was departing from it. It seems probable that these incidents refer to different persons, and at different times. As usual in such narratives, the account of the miracle by Mark is the most minute in details. He not only gives the name of the blind man and that of his father, but states also that he was sitting by the highway side begging. This is true and

life-like. We have seen beggars everywhere during our pilgrimage, and blind beggars seated by the way-side are one of the features of this country.

Matthew says there were two blind men, but Mark and Luke mention only one.[1]

True, but Mark does not say that there was no other with him; and in the fact that he gives his name—Bartimeus—and reports the conversation that passed between him and Jesus, we may probably see the reason why he mentions him only. He was the most earnest, and possessed greater faith than his comrade. You may find the whole mystery of prayer in this brief dialogue between Jesus and the blind son of Timeus. "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Why such a question, since Jesus not only knew what he wanted, but had determined to grant it? It was nevertheless natural that Bartimeus should formally ask for what he wanted, and it is equally becoming that all should make their requests known to God in humble prayer; and they will do just as Bartimeus did when they feel their need, and have like faith. In spite of the rebukes of the multitude, they will not "hold their peace," nor will they be deterred by the scoffs of sceptics.

In the nineteenth chapter of Luke it is said that "Jesus entered and passed through Jericho;" and it was on that occasion that the meeting with "Zaccheus, chief among the publicans," took place. That incident appears to imply a third visit of our Lord to this city, though it may have occurred on one of the other occasions. From the great moral miracle wrought in the heart of Zaccheus we may also learn that He who knows what is in man, and "needed not that any should testify of man," did not always require or wait for the formal petition.[2] He himself becomes the petitioner—"Make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."[3] Happy they who, thus called to "make haste," receive the gracious Saviour joyfully into their hearts and homes.

The Biblical notices of Jericho end with these visits of our Lord, but it has a history independent of the Bible. Josephus frequently mentions it, both in the Antiquities and in the Jewish

[1] Matt. xx. 29–34; Mark x. 46–52; Luke xviii. 35–43.
[2] John ii. 25.
[3] Luke xix. 5.

Wars. Pompey, on his way to Jerusalem from Damascus, spent one night in Jericho. It was plundered by the Roman soldiers in the time of Marc Antony. The famous Cleopatra, to whom Antony assigned the revenues of two gardens which produced the almost priceless balm, was also here. She was returning to Egypt from the Euphrates, whither she had accompanied Antony, and was the guest of Herod the Great in Jerusalem. He appears to have farmed of her the gardens, and was glad to rid himself of the dangerous queen by bestowing large presents upon her.[1]

This region was noted in ancient times for its roses and fragrant spicery, was it not?

I find no allusion to its roses except in Ecclesiasticus, where Wisdom says, "I was exalted as a rose-plant in Jericho."[2] But for other precious and fragrant productions Jericho was especially celebrated. It was pre-eminently the city of palm-trees, of different varieties, and bearing the very best fruit. A solitary survivor grows close to the tower of Erîha. Josephus says that this region of Jericho produced the balsam, which is the most precious drug that is there, and grows there alone;[3] and in book viii. vi. 6, he intimates that the balsam-bearing tree was introduced into the country by the Queen of Sheba when she visited Solomon.

Do you suppose that the thorny bush called zŭkŭm by the Arabs is the tree in question?

Certainly not, but it is the only candidate for that honor now found at Jericho, and resembles in appearance the crab-apple-tree. It is the Balanites Ægyptiaca, and bears a small nut, from which the balsam is made, and sold by the monks as the balm of Gilead, so famous in ancient times. I have purchased vials of it when in this neighborhood, but could not discover that it possessed any medicinal virtues. The tree is not confined to the plain of Jericho. I found it in great numbers in Wady Fâri'a, and of a larger size than these just below 'Ain es Sultân.

It is curious that classic writers—Tacitus, Strabo, Pliny—agree in mentioning Syria as the country from which the most costly balm was produced; and Theophrastus says that the tree was found in two gardens in a valley in Syria, one containing twenty acres, and

[1] Ant. xv. iv. 2. [2] Eccl. xxiv. 14. [3] Ant. xv. iv. 2.

the other still smaller. How it came to be called Balm of Gilead I know not, unless because it first came from that country. Those Ishmaelites who purchased Joseph came from Gilead, and were carrying balm to Egypt; and Jeremiah twice mentions it by that name.[1] It has been stated in the most unqualified manner that the tree from which balsam is obtained is not found in Gilead; but Gilead is a very vague geographical term, especially as used in ancient Biblical nomenclature, and we may allow a very wide range to the name. Very little is known about the productions of many parts of that vast region. He therefore must be either a bold or a careless man who ventures to pronounce absolutely upon what does or does not grow there. And finally, if it could be shown that the tree is not now found in Gilead, this would not prove that it never grew there. Jericho was once called the City of Palms, but they have entirely disappeared, and so, perhaps, have the balm-bearing bushes; for I cannot accept this scraggy zŭkŭm as the source of the precious and costly balm of Gilead.

It is sufficiently tantalizing to find one's self, at this late day, bewildered by the contradictory statements of travellers and scientific scholars in regard to this celebrated commodity, the country whence it was obtained, and the tree, shrub, or bush from which it was extracted. Burckhardt says it grows in gardens about Tiberias; but I have been there many times, and could never hear of it from the natives. In Arabia, however, Burckhardt became acquainted with it, or what passes for it. He states that Szafra and Beder, between Mekka and Medina, are the only places where the balsam of Mekka can be procured in a pure state. The tree from which it is collected grows in the neighboring mountains, and is called beshem. I was informed, he adds, that the tree is from ten to fifteen feet high, with a smooth trunk and thin bark. In the middle of summer small incisions are made in the bark; and the juice, which immediately issues, is taken off with the thumb-nail, and put into a vessel. The gum appears to be of two kinds, one of a white, and the other of a yellowish-white, color. The first is the most esteemed. It had a strong turpentine smell, and its taste was bitter. The people of Szafra adulterate it with sesamum-oil

[1] Jer. viii. 22; xlvi. 11.

and tar. When they try its purity they dip their finger into it, and then set fire to it. If it burn without hurting or leaving a mark on the finger, they judge it to be of a good quality; but if it burn the finger, they judge it to be adulterated.

I remember to have read in Bruce's travels an account of the mode of testing it by letting a drop fall into a cup filled with water; the good balsam coagulated and fell to the bottom, and the bad dissolved and swam on the surface. I tried, says Mr. Bruce, this experiment, which was unknown to the people here, and found the drop swim upon the water. I tried also their test by fire upon the finger of a native, who had to regret his temerity. I therefore regarded the balsam sold here as adulterated. It was of less density than honey. It is sold by the Bedawîn for two or three dollars per pound when quite pure, and the Szafra Arabs resell it to the hadjis of the great caravan at between eight and twelve dollars per pound in an adulterated state. The richer class of the hadjis put a drop of balsam into the first cup of coffee they drink in the morning, from a notion that it acts as a tonic.

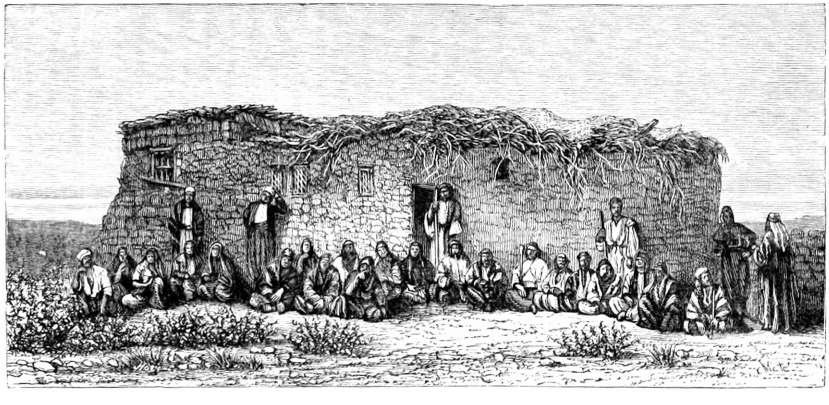
The uncertainty in regard to this precious commodity may arise from the fact that there are several kinds of it, and that it has been procured from various countries of Arabia, India, and South-eastern Africa. It is a resinous substance, solid or liquid, according to the methods employed in manufacturing it. It was used as a medicine, and this is implied in the places in which the name is mentioned by Jeremiah.[1]

Perhaps the boshem frequently mentioned in the Bible, and translated spices, was a variety of balm.[2] The Arabic name for the balm-bearing bush is bushem, almost identical with the Hebrew both in form and signification, and it grows on the mountains of Arabia, and probably on the adjacent coasts of Africa. Forskâl calls this bushem, which he found near Hās, in South Arabia, Amyris opobalsamum. The tree has a red wood and spinous branches. During July, August, and September the juice is collected by puncturing the tree, and is kept in earthen bottles. The quantity obtained is very small, and the price extremely high.

Jericho early became the seat of a Christian bishopric; and as

[1] Jer. viii. 22; xlvi. 11; li. 8. [2] Exod. xxxv. 28; Cant. v. 1, 13, and vi. 2.

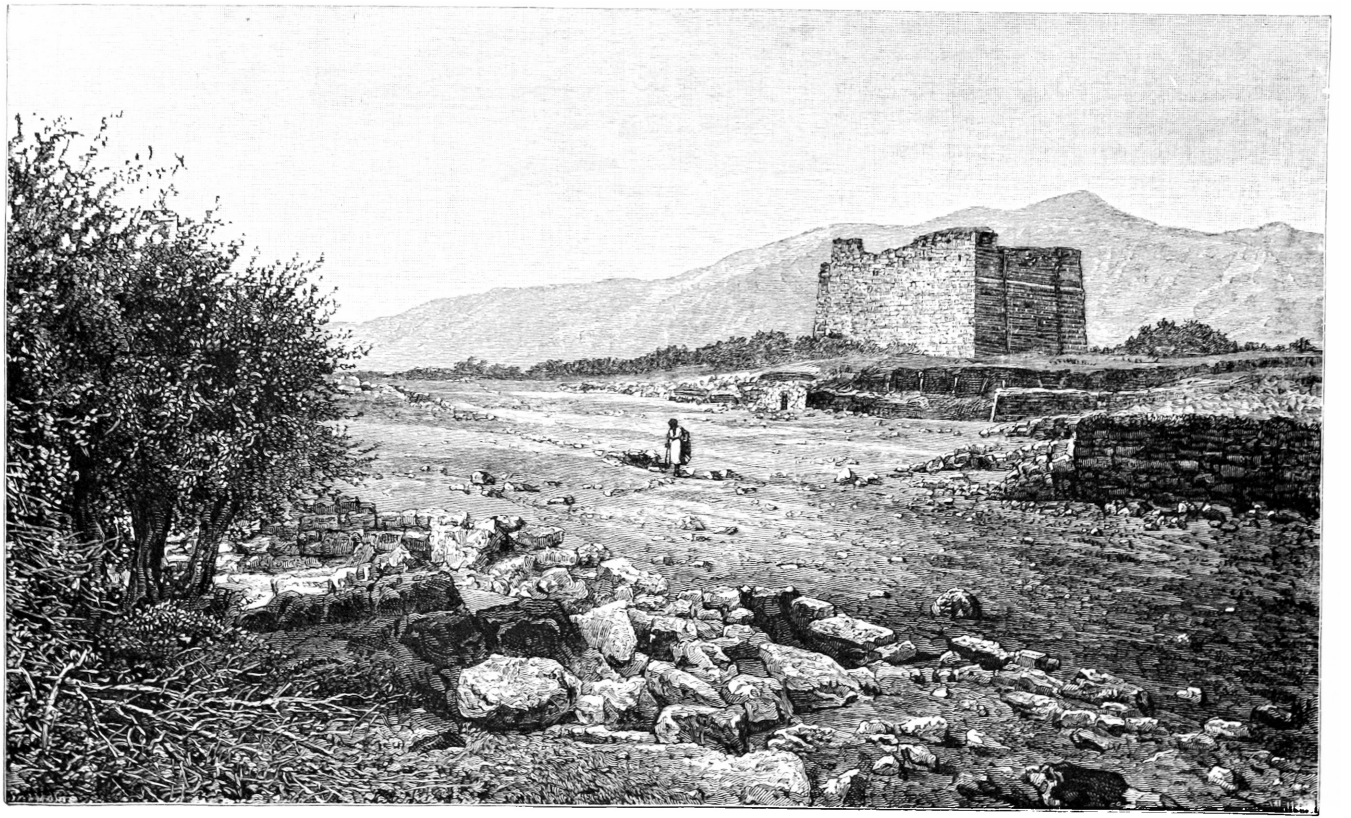
the desire to visit sacred sites grew and prevailed, this vicinity was overrun with pilgrims; and Jericho became the centre of a large number of convents, caves, and anchorite habitations. And thus it has continued through all the changes of dynasties, races, and religions, down to the present day. Pilgrims from all parts of Christendom still visit the dilapidated ruins of ancient convents, sacred caves, and traditional sites in great numbers, and bathe in the waters of esh Sherî'ah, as the Jordan is now called.



HOUSE AT JERICHO, AND GROUP OF NATIVES.

Erîha, modern Jericho, which we visited this morning, is easily described. The ride of about two miles through the thickets of nŭbk and sidr bushes was pleasant enough, but the village itself is, without exception, the most squalid cluster of human habitations I have yet seen.

Or, perhaps, ever will see. There may be some fifty hovels huddled together promiscuously a short distance west of the square tower which tradition has selected for the house of Zaccheus. The hovels are only a few feet high and flat-roofed. The walls are built of small unhewn stones, loosely laid up and covered over with thorn-bushes, brush, and corn-stalks, upon which a slight layer of earth is placed. Some of them have yards in front, protected by thorny hedges, within which the goats and cattle are penned at night; but the whole, inside and out, and all around, is so unutterably filthy that one can scarcely muster sufficient resolution to enter.



ERÎHA—JERICHO.

The appearance of things in general has considerably changed since my first visit in 1833, indicative of greater security from lawless Bedawîn. The entire group of huts was then surrounded by a high hedge of the thorny nŭbk and sidr trees. Now no such protection conceals the wretched hovels, and the vulgar reality is deplorable to the last degree. The people, also, appear more squalid and demoralized—results which may have been produced by the influx of strangers, especially of the more abandoned classes.

The view from the top of the tower is impressive, but the structure itself has no pretensions either to architectural beauty or historic celebrity, and of course it could have had no connection with Zaccheus.

It is merely a plain square tower about thirty-five feet high, and nearly as broad, but there is not a stone in it, I suppose, that ever belonged to ancient Jericho. It may date back to Crusading times, but was probably erected by the Saracens.

The Russians are building a small convent and hospice northwest of the tower, but the stone for it has to be brought from a distance. The original city, wherever erected, must have been constructed mainly of crude brick, for in this dry, hot climate stone would not have so entirely disintegrated and disappeared. A small Greek chapel and one for the Latins have been lately erected amongst the gardens of Erîha; and in the pilgrim season temporary locandas promise accommodation for travellers, but they swarm with mosquitoes and vermin of all kinds, and should be avoided.

The present inhabitants of Erîha appear to be an idle and shiftless generation. The greater part of the plain watered by the stream from 'Ain es Sultân is overgrown with the zŭkŭm, sidr, and other thorny trees and bushes. Here and there patches of tobacco, cucumbers, melons, maize, and various kinds of vegetables are grown in small quantities. The lazy natives of this fertile region eke out a wretched existence by begging and stealing, and they seem to have nothing to sell or exchange.

Large parties of Jericho Arabs of both sexes frequently come up here to sing and dance, and go through other absurd performances, for the amusement of travellers. Canon Tristram says of them that their "dance consists in the movement of the body rather

than of the limbs; and one woman in front of the circle, with a scarf in both hands, gave the time gracefully enough to the twenty-three performers who made up the party. They were a miserable and depraved-looking set, scantily clad in blue cotton, all very filthy, and, except two or three of the younger ones, most repulsive in feature. I never saw such vacant and debased features in any group of human beings of the type and form of whites."

Have you much confidence in the proposed site of Gilgal, the place where the Israelites first encamped after crossing the Jordan?

Lieutenant Conder found the name Jiljûlieh given to the large open pool which we visited this morning, about a mile to the east of Erîha; and one is inclined the more readily to accept this identification, since we know from other sources that Gilgal must have been in that immediate neighborhood. Josephus says that it was fifty furlongs from the Jordan, and ten from Jericho. Now, if the Jericho of Joshua was at or near 'Ain es Sultân, as I believe it was, Gilgal could not have been farther east than that pool of Jiljûlieh. Indeed, the Hebrew camp must have included the site of the present Erîha, for that is at least ten furlongs from 'Ain es Sultân. The modern idea suggested by the word city is calculated to mislead in cases like the present. Jericho must have been of quite limited extent, for on the seventh day of its investment by Joshua the priestly procession bearing the ark compassed the city seven times. They could not have marched very near the walls, and if these enclosed the space of a square mile only, the distance traversed by this procession on the seventh day must have been about thirty miles, which is scarcely credible. The probability is that the city was much less than a mile square.

It should also be remembered that the term Gilgal must have included a large district. The place where the tabernacle, with its priestly keepers, was pitched may have been at or near the pool of Jiljûlieh, but the entire camp would necessarily spread over the plain. There were some two millions of people, with all their possessions, and, crowd their tents ever so closely, they would extend far down towards the Jordan. We may be quite sure, therefore, that the pool and all that neighborhood was actually included within the limits of that vast camp.

Although Gilgal continued to be a place of great importance, there probably never was a regularly built city at that place at all. The tabernacle, it is true, with all that appertained to it and was connected with its service, was at Gilgal, but it is very likely that the priests continued to dwell in tents; and when the tabernacle was removed to Shiloh, the whole camp would go with it, leaving no permanent trace behind of its existence.

No matter in what direction we travel over it, or what may be the topic under consideration, one is continually reminded of the astounding changes that have come to pass on this great plain. For centuries Gilgal was not only the religious, but also the political, centre of the entire Hebrew people dwelling on both sides of the Jordan. It was to Gilgal that the thousands of Israel, worshippers of Jehovah, gathered several times every year to keep the great feasts of the Lord. It needed just such an ample open plain to accommodate those vast assemblies and the victims for their numberless sacrifices. No doubt the people long retained possession of their tents, in which they and their fathers had dwelt, and could readily pitch them on the occasion of those mighty convocations. It calls for no great stretch of the imagination to repeople this region with the assembled hosts of Israel. No place could be better adapted for the purpose than this, with its warm climate, its abundant supply of water, and its sandy surface upon which to encamp. But now it is utterly forsaken and abandoned. The Hebrew nation has been scattered to the ends of the earth, and the visitors to Jericho and Gilgal come hither from distant and little-known regions and countries to meditate, to wonder, and to deplore.

Gilgal was one of the three places visited by Samuel in his judicial circuits. He "judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places."[1] After Saul had defeated Nahash the Ammonite, and delivered Jabesh-gilead, Samuel said to the people, "Come, and let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal; and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all

[1] 1 Sam. vii. 15, 16.

the men of Israel rejoiced greatly."[1] It was in Gilgal that Saul, assuming the priest's office, and offering unauthorized sacrifice, was rebuked by Samuel: "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue."[2] It was at Gilgal that the last sad meeting took place between Saul and Samuel, after the return of Saul from the expedition against the Amalekites. "As Samuel turned about to go away, he [Saul] laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou. And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death."[3]

[1] 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15. [2] 1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14. [3] 1 Sam. xv. 27, 28, 35.

XIII.

JERICHO TO JERUSALEM.

View from the Tell above 'Ain es Sultân.—Tawahîn es Sukkar, the Sugar-mills.—Sugar-cane.—Jebel Kŭrŭntŭl, the Quarantana.—Description of the Hermits' Cells by Canon Tristram.—Aqueducts in Wady Kelt.—Bridge over the Stream from Wady Kelt.—The Brook Cherith.—Elijah fed by the Ravens.—View of the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, and the Mountains of Moab from 'Akabet ed Deir.—Deir Wady Kelt.—Anchorites, and Superstitions, Ancient and Modern.—The Wilderness the Chosen Abode of the Tempter.—Extent of the Desert of Judæa.—Songs of Degrees.—The One Hundred and Twenty-second Psalm.—The Road from Jericho to Jerusalem travelled by Christ.—Khân el Ahmar.—The Good Samaritan.—Boundary between Judah and Benjamin.—Tal'at ed Damm, Adummim.—'Ain el Haud, En-shemesh.—The Apostles' Fountain.—Ascent to Bethany.—Traditional Sites in Bethany.—Bethany.—The Chosen Retreat of Jesus.—El 'Azirîyeh.—Melisinda.—Iveta.—Road from Bethany to Jerusalem.—Dean Stanley's Description of the Triumphal Procession of Christ from Bethany to Jerusalem.—Comprehensive View of the Holy City and its Surroundings from the Camp on Olivet.—The Forty-eighth Psalm.—Preliminary Warning concerning the Discussions relating to Sacred Sites and Scenes.—Martha, Mary, Lazarus.—Jesus at Bethany.

April 26th.

I THOUGHT I should find you here on the top of this tell, above the tents, for it commands an extensive view of the whole surrounding country.

I came up to take a farewell survey of the regions which we have visited during the past few days, and to see the sun rise once more over the eastern mountains and this impressive plain of Jericho. Without any guide I can now distinguish and name most of the ancient sites that meet the eye: behind us, on the west, tower the gray and honey-combed cliffs of Quarantana, the Mount of Temptation; in the immediate foreground the green oasis created by 'Ain es Sultân spreads to the village of Jericho, and onwards past ancient Gilgal, towards the Jordan beyond. On the other side of the river the dark mountains of Moab and of Edom bound the eastern horizon, having the wide plain of Abel-shittim at their

feet, and the heights of Nebo and Pisgah above. Far away to the south the Dead Sea sleeps in its mysterious sepulchre. Northwards stretches the valley of the Jordan, sheltered by everlasting hills on either side, the lofty Kŭrn Sŭrtabeh on the west, and the noble mountains of Gilead and Bashan on the east. This vast area of plain and mountain and river and sea is crowded with ancient sites, whose names recall many of the grandest and some of the most sublime and appalling events in Biblical history.

The mental impression of this amazing panorama will abide with you while life may last. But Salîm sends us the summons to breakfast, and we must obey it as the necessary prelude to our day's ride to Jerusalem.

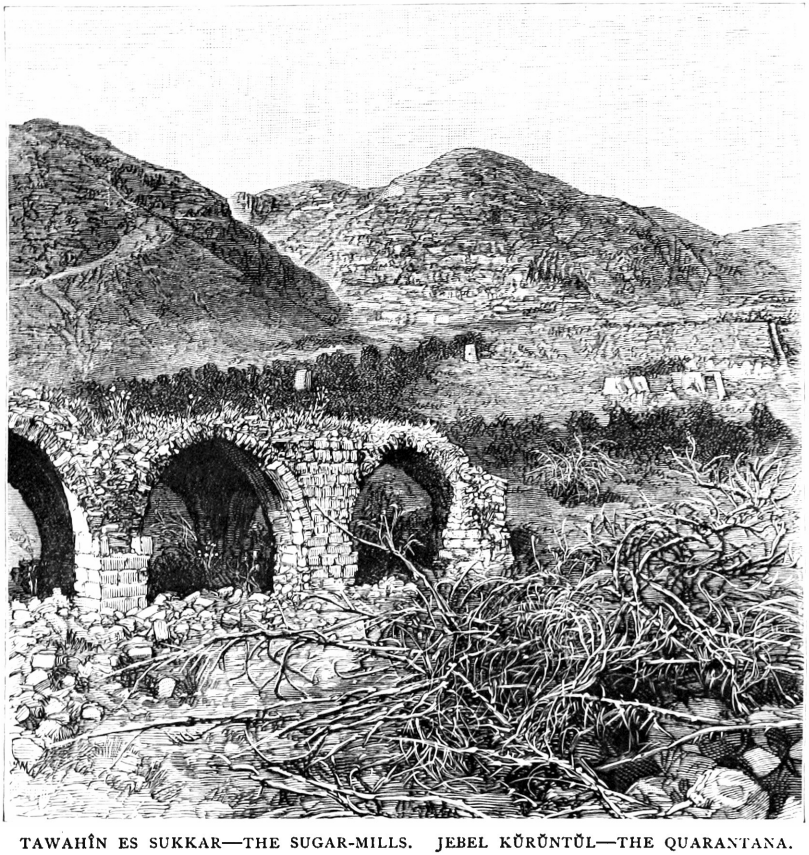
Leaving the men to strike the tents and find their way to the Holy City at their leisure, we will ramble over some parts of this neighborhood which we have not yet visited.

Though I have no ambition to scale those cliffs of the Quarantana, I would like to ride to the foot of them, from whence we can obtain a better idea of their character.

On the way thither we can look at the ruins of Tawâhîn es Sukkar, the sugar-mills. They have long been neglected, the aqueduct that brought the water to them from 'Ain Dûk broken, and the only use now made of the dilapidated vaults is to shelter cattle from the storms of winter and from the burning sun of summer.

The name and the ruins seem to imply that at no distant day in the past the sugar-cane was extensively cultivated on this plain.

That may well have been the case, although there is now no other trace of such a culture. The sugar plantations are said to have flourished during the time of the Crusades, and to have yielded a large revenue to the Knights of Jerusalem. The net-work of aqueducts which we have seen may have been constructed to irrigate fields of the sugar-cane, and for its growth they would be absolutely essential, since the cane cannot thrive in this country without a constant and abundant supply of fresh water. It is a curious fact that long before the discovery of America the sorghum-cane was cultivated on this plain of Jericho. By the Crusaders it was transferred to Spain, and subsequently, by the Spaniards, carried to the West Indies, where it flourished greatly, and the cultivation of it



TAWAHÎN ES SUKKAR—THE SUGAR-MILLS. JEBEL KŬRŬNTŬL—THE QUARANTANA.

rapidly extended to many parts of the Western World. Our present business, however, is not with the sugar-cane and its migrations from the Old to the New World. We have before us a rough ride to the base of Jebel Kŭrŭntŭl, the Quarantana, over a rolling country, sparsely dotted with the same kind of thorny trees and bushes that abound between 'Ain es Sultân and Erîha.

Without any road to follow, we have had quite a scramble amongst thorn-bushes and over loose stones, but the nearer view of these cliffs well repays one for the effort and the scratches by the way. Those openings seen in various places along the perpendicular face of the cliffs are the entrances, I suppose, into the famous cells of the hermits and anchorites?

They are; but I have not examined them. Many years ago, when I was here for the first time, they were occupied by Bedawîn robbers, and no one could venture near them. Recently, however, they have been thoroughly explored by Canon Tristram and by members of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The chambers are mostly small artificial cells cut in the rock, but some are natural caverns of considerable size. Canon Tristram says of them:

"On this eastern face are some thirty or forty habitable caves and chapels; and probably there is a much larger number on the south face, in the gorge of the Kelt. These caverns have all been approached by staircases and paths hewn out of the face of the rock; but time and water have worn away many of these, and left the upper caverns in some cases wholly inaccessible. The lowest range of caves is close to the edge of the sloping débris, and they are still tenanted by the Arabs, who use them for sheepfolds and donkey-stables, and sometimes, as we discovered, for corn and straw depots. The next tier is easily reached; and generally every spring a few devout Abyssinian Christians are in the habit of coming and remaining here for forty days, to keep their Lent on the spot where they suppose our Lord to have fasted and been tempted.

"This tier is easily accessible to any one with a steady head. The way to it is by a niche hollowed in the side of the precipice. The ground-floor of these cells, if the expression may apply to such aërial dwellings, appears to have been a series of chambers, with recesses hollowed for beds and for cupboards. There are four of these apartments opening into each other, the natural caverns having been artificially enlarged. Below is a large well-plastered reservoir or tank, to which the water has formerly been conveyed through cement-lined stone tubes, from the water-fall, several hundred feet to the right. These tubes are neatly concealed in the rock, and quite out of reach of any attack."

In the third chamber, reached with some difficulty through "a small round hole scooped out of the native rock, were three consecutive chambers, with a well-arched front of fine dressed stone, and various arched door-ways and windows looking east," and "all lined with frescoes, of which the faces alone had been chipped out by Moslem iconoclasts. The centre room was evidently a chapel, cov-

ered with Byzantine paintings of saints, and had an apse in the east front, with a small lancet-window. The dome of the apse was filled by a fresco of our Lord, with a Greek inscription over it."

Through another hole in the rock Canon Tristram and his party, with the aid of a rope, climbed, "and, with a short exercise of the chimney-sweep's art," found themselves "in a third tier of cells, similar to the lower ones, and covered with the undisturbed dust of ages. Behind the chapel was a dark cave, with an entrance eighteen inches high, full of human bones and skulls, with dust several inches deep. We were in the burial-place of the anchorites. The skeletons were laid west and east, awaiting the resurrection." Higher still this adventurous party climbed up the dangerous and giddy heights, aided by a fresh supply of ropes and by the "Bedawîn, who climb with the agility of wild goats." At every turn they found similar cells, chapels, and caverns covered with bones and skulls and human remains. There were many short inscriptions in Greek, but of no particular historical value. The account of these remarkable works, however, throws important light upon a phase of distorted faith and life which has long passed away, thank God, never to return.

Canon Tristram closes his account with the following observations: "I have described these hermits' cells at somewhat tedious length, as we were disposed to believe that they had not hitherto been thoroughly explored by any traveller or described by any writer. Certainly neither Robinson, Porter, nor Thomson had entered them; and ordinary tourists are not likely to provide themselves here with torches and ropes, or to trust themselves to the latter." This is certainly correct, and the world may be thankful for the revelations made by this energetic and daring party of explorers.

The range of cliffs seems to have been honey-combed with these cells, caverns, chapels, sepulchres, tunnels, and staircases, the work of hosts of devout but superstitious anchorites and pilgrims during long ages.

In our ascent along Wady Kelt we shall see traces of similar caves in the overhanging precipices on the southern face of this wonderful Quarantana, the traditional site of the Temptation. And

now we must descend to the wady, near which are the remains of aqueducts and channels for the distribution of the water well worthy of examination.

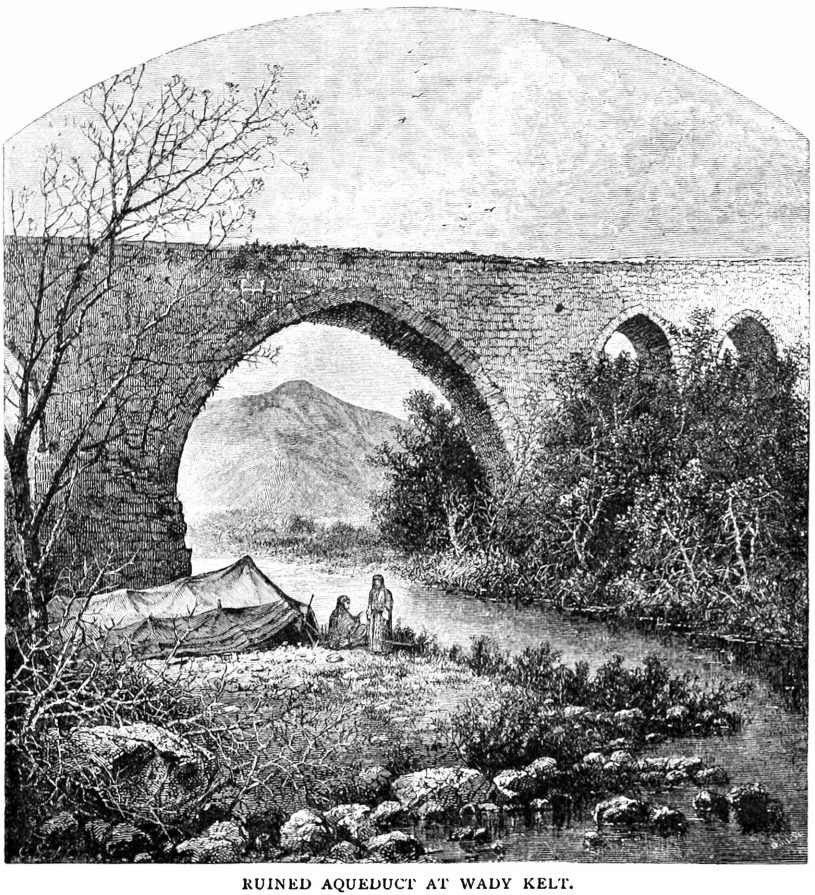
Including short detours to some of the broken aqueducts whose waters once clothed with fertility those glades now silent and forsaken, it has taken us an hour to ride from the base of the Quarantana to the entrance of Wady Kelt. Lieutenant Conder describes no less than five aqueducts which follow the course of this wady, some of them irrigating the land south of it, while others carried the water to the north, far and wide over the plain.

In one or two places I noticed that the high wall on the top of which ran the aqueducts was faced with small stones, neatly cut, and fitted into it in patterns like tessellated pavement. We have nowhere else seen any similar ornamentation.

It is the only specimen of the kind, I believe, in this region, but I have seen the same style of work amongst the remains of ancient cities in the Haurân. Look at that lofty bridge across the wady. It is now, of course, broken and useless, but it once carried a powerful stream over the wady at least sixty feet above the bottom of the ravine. The canal to it from the fountain is brought down Wady Kelt at a higher elevation of one hundred feet above this imposing bridge, and the water was distributed to the surrounding fields by several channels. At the north buttress there seems to have been a shaft, and part of the water descended to a lower level and followed the north side of the wady. The remainder of the water was carried to the south side, where another shaft allowed part of the current to descend some thirty feet, separating it into two aqueducts at different levels. "Thus from this remarkable bridge we have no less than three channels to follow, without counting the branch which passes above Deir el Kelt at the original level of the single channel, and thus supplied the convent with water."

If this stream flowing under the bridge be "the brook Cherith that is before Jordan," where the Lord directed Elijah to hide himself from Ahab, the mere tool in the hands of Jezebel, it does not seem in a fair way to dry up as it did then; still there is not much water in it even now.[1]

[1] 1 Kings xvii. 1–7; xviii. 1–16.



RUINED AQUEDUCT AT WADY KELT.

I have crossed it earlier in the season, when it was a turbid, boisterous torrent, not easily stemmed.

Upon what authority, historic or traditionary, is it identified with the Cherith where the prophet found a temporary asylum from Ahab's persecuting queen? There is very slight resemblance in the names, and the position seems too far south; while to reach "Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there," would require him to traverse the kingdom of Israel, where Jezebel's influence was supreme.

I know of no reliable authority, or even respectable tradition, to establish the identification; and certainly the resemblance between

the names Cherith and Kelt is too remote to be of much avail. Dr. Robinson, however, says that "the Arabic form Kelt and the Hebrew Cherith are, indeed, not exactly the same, though the change from resh to lam, and that of kaph into koph, are sometimes found. There is also an apparent difficulty in the circumstance that the brook Cherith is said to be *before* Jordan, which is usually understood as meaning *east* of Jordan. But the difficulty vanishes if we translate it towards Jordan; and that this may be done is shown by Genesis xviii. 16, xix. 28, where the angels and Abraham, in the vicinity of Hebron, are said to have 'looked *towards* Sodom,' the expression in Hebrew being the very same as here; so, too, in Judges xvi. 3."[1]

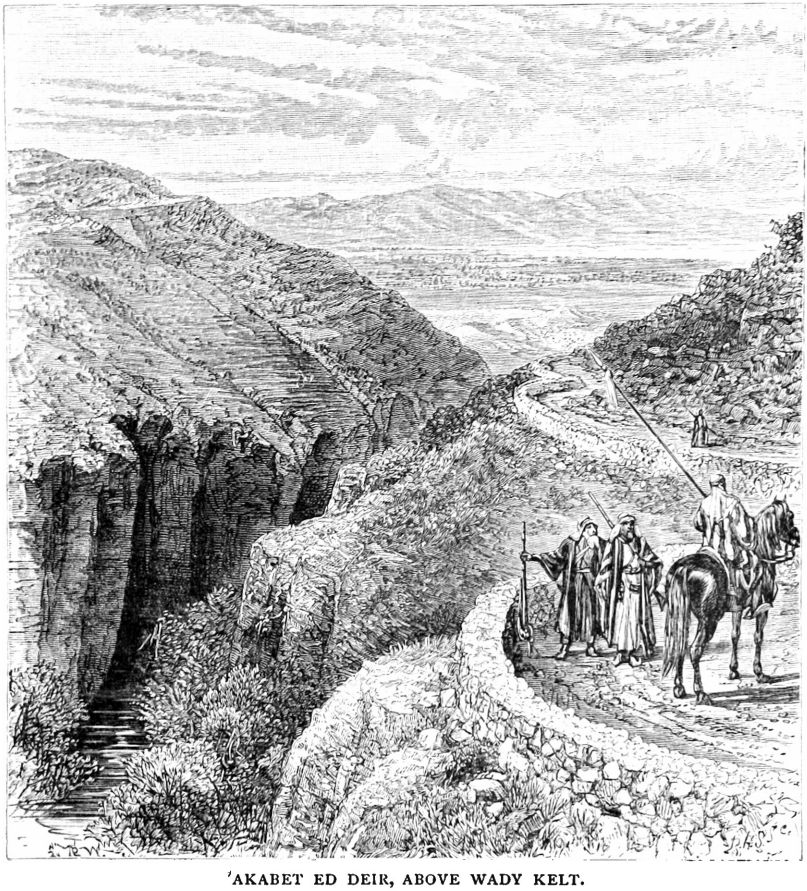
The doctor appears inclined to accept the identification; others, however, have sought for the brook much farther north, but the evidence in favor of any site yet proposed is far from decisive.

As to Wady Kelt itself, it is admirably adapted to the purpose for which Elijah resorted to Cherith. It is a narrow, profound gorge, overhung by tremendous cliffs, absolutely impassable, in whose numerous recesses and dark caverns the prophet could have been most effectually concealed. I have passed up and down the south side of it by night, and looked into its fearful chasm with awe; for it then appears simply bottomless. On another occasion the appearance of a pair of ravens, black and glossy, sailing leisurely down the chasm, brought vividly to mind the circumstances of the Biblical incident; and I was quite ready to recognize them as the lineal descendants of the birds that were commanded by the Lord to feed the prophet.

Do you attach any importance to the suggestion of certain critics that Elijah was fed by a tribe of migrating Arabs having the same name as the Hebrew word for ravens?

The record says simply that, at the command of the Lord, "the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." That is all I know about the matter; but it is no more incredible that ravens should thus supply the prophet at Cherith, than that the widow's handful of meal should not diminish, nor her cruse of oil fail in

[1] Rob. Res. note, vol. i. p. 558.



'AKABET ED DEIR, ABOVE WADY KELT.

Sarepta, or that fire should come down from heaven and consume the sacrifice on Carmel, or that Elijah should go forty days and forty nights upon the strength of the two cakes he ate in the wilderness, until he came unto Horeb. Many things were done by, to, and for Elijah not less wonderful than this incident of the ravens; and I see no need of inventing a tribe of Arabs with the name Oreb —raven—in order to make it easier for the Lord to furnish food for Elijah. He that gave food to "the young ravens which cry" could certainly feed one of his prophets by the brook Cherith.

We have now reached the top of the first steep ascent, on the south side of Wady Kelt, and may rest our tired horses, while we

take a final view of the scenes in which we have been so deeply interested during the past few days. This pass, called 'Akabet ed Deir, must always have been of great importance. A little farther on we lose sight of the Jordan valley altogether, and the outlook from those projecting rocks on our right is justly regarded by tourists as the most impressive along the route from Jerusalem to Jericho.

They are not mistaken, nor is it easy to overstate the significance of the scene. But the attempt to reproduce, by the aid of the pen or the pencil, a panorama so vast and so varied, can at best be but partially successful. The sites are too many and too distant to group together in one comprehensive picture, and to be brought out with sufficient distinctness to satisfy the eye of any one who gazes upon the impressive reality. How wide do you suppose the Jordan valley is at this part of it?

Some sixteen miles. It would take about three hours from this across the plain to the river, and two hours more to traverse the green glades of Abel-shittim and reach the foot of the eastern mountains of Moab, beyond Tell Nimrîn. Another hour's steep climbing brings the traveller to the fountain of Hesbân, and, if he goes on for another hour south of that, to 'Ayûn Mûsa, the copious springs of Moses, below the ruins of ancient Heshbon. Those two high headlands which close the prospect south of the 'Ayûn, and overhang the deep chasm of the Dead Sea, are Nâba' and Siâghaḥ, the Nebo and Pisgah

> Where Moses stood,
> And viewed the landscape o'er,

unto the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar. He looked this way, and longed to cross over Jordan and see this goodly land, but was denied. We, more favored, are permitted, peacefully and at our leisure, to "walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it;" and it is time to "arise" and pursue our pilgrimage. The prospect east, north, and south includes what we looked upon this morning from the tell above 'Ain es Sultân, though from our present position the view is more varied and extensive. Beneath us is the profound gorge of Wady Kelt, at the bottom of which rushes the traditionary brook Cherith. Above it, on the north, tow-

ers the Quarantana, with its caverns, cells, and rock-hewn chapels; while here and there, overhanging the torrent, are to be seen traces of ancient aqueducts.

On our right we have the southern face of Jebel Kŭrŭntŭl, which presents only dark perpendicular cliffs, in many places utterly inaccessible. There is on the summit a small dilapidated church, mentioned by Sir John Maundeville, and clinging to the cliffs far below are the remains of Deir Wady Kelt. "Like every other monastery in the hills," Lieutenant Conder says, "it is hung on a precipice. It consists of a series of cells, and a hall supported on vaults, through which lies the entrance. The chapel, perched close to the rock, is not Oriental. The evident reason of this is the direction of the rock scarp. The rest of the building is not in the same line as the chapel. There are at least three dates discoverable, as two layers of frescoes cover the wall, whilst the inscriptions of the newest are covered in part by the piers supporting the ribs of the roof. The chapel is built of dressed stones, whilst the cells and vaults are of masonry roughly squared. This part bears every sign of twelfth-century work. Perhaps the little side chapel, with rock chamber, and the vault containing ancient bones, to which a corridor covered with frescoes representing the Last Judgment leads, is the oldest part of the building. Numerous caves, now inaccessible, are visible in the face of the cliff, which for a distance of eighty feet is covered with frescoes, now almost entirely defaced. One of these cells has at its entrance a heavy iron bar, placed vertically, no doubt originally to support a rope or ladder. Like the upper chambers at Kŭrŭntŭl, this is probably a funeral vault."

This Quarantana — Mount of Temptation, and of caverns and cells—must have accommodated numerous hermits and anchorites for many centuries, and I would not judge them hastily. Some of them were doubtless sincere, and deeply in earnest to work out in that way their title to heaven.

And yet it is difficult for us to understand how such a monstrous perversion of Scripture, human reason, and common-sense prevailed over the whole of Christendom. Multitudes forsook their homes, and the safeguards and helps in the great conflict against evil which Christian society and institutions afford, and took refuge

in the howling deserts and cheerless caverns, there to dwell amongst savage beasts, and like them to live and to die. This is all the more extraordinary since associated with it was another phase of superstitious belief, equally prevalent, though quite antagonistic to it. All classes and all sects in the Eastern World believed then, and do so still, that there are all around us, in the air, in the water, on the earth, and under it, demons and evil spirits of many kinds and many ranks; and it is the common opinion that such malignant beings haunt the desert, dark caves, old tombs, forsaken towers, deep wells, open fountains, and other similar places. A devout Moslem will not enter any such suspected place without first exorcising the evil spirit, and then muttering a petition to be protected from its designs. But the anchorites, on the contrary, seem to have selected the special resorts of these dangerous enemies for their own habitations, as if on purpose to encounter them single-handed and alone.

Is it not implied in the accounts of Christ's temptation that the desert and the wilderness were the chosen abodes of the Tempter?

If this is to be inferred from the facts stated in all the synoptic gospels—that Jesus was led or driven into the wilderness by the Spirit, to be tempted of the Devil—the wiser course for frail mortals would surely be to avoid such places with the utmost care, rather than to select them for their own abode. Upon those forty days of temptation, however, is thrown the veil of divine silence, nor should an idle curiosity seek to penetrate those hidden mysteries. But he would be a presumptuous man who should attempt to imitate our Lord in this particular; and Jesus may have intended to meet the Tempter on his own chosen ground, and there to baffle and defeat him. The divine Son of God could safely do this, but no one who knows his own weakness will seek such a conflict. His prayer will ever be, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," or, rather, from the Evil One.

If the intention was to meet and conquer the arch-enemy of God and man in a lonely and blasted wilderness, none could be found better suited for the purpose than this Jebel Kŭrŭntŭl and its surroundings. There is not a house, or a tree, or water for the support of life.

And this desert region, the Wilderness of Judæa, stretches from

the confines of Bethany to the valley of the Jordan; nor is there any indication that this wilderness was ever cultivated. Such as it is now it has always been. Through it, however, lies our way to the Holy City, the symbolic type of the heavenly Jerusalem. Bunyan, were he our fellow-traveller, might here find more than one spiritual similitude to illustrate the progress of his pilgrim.

If the traditionary interpretation of the title, Song of Degrees, prefixed to some fifteen of the Psalms, be accepted, that they were sung by devout pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem to keep the great feasts of the Lord, we may suppose that companies toiling up this long ascent would relieve the tedium of the way by chanting some of them.[1]

From the customs of Orientals still prevalent, I think it highly probable that such an explanation of the title may be substantially correct. Nothing is more common than to hear individuals and parties of natives, travelling together through the open country and along mountain-paths, especially during the night, break out into singing some of their favorite songs. Once, descending from the top of Sunnîn, above Beirût, with a large company of natives, they spontaneously began to sing in concert. The moon was shining brightly in the clear sky, and they kept up their chanting for a long time. I shall not soon forget the impression made by that moonlight concert, as we wound our way down the eastern side of Lebanon to the Bŭkâ'a, on the way to Ba'albek. Through the still midnight air of that lofty region the rough edge of their stentorian voices, softened into melody, rang out full and strong, waking the sleeping echoes far and wide down the rocky defiles of the mountain. Something like this may have often rendered vocal this dreary ascent to Jerusalem. It is common in this country to travel in the night during the summer, and we know that the Hebrew pilgrims journeyed in large companies. On his ascent along this road from Jericho to the Holy City, Jesus was attended not only by the twelve apostles but by others, both men and women; and it would be strange indeed if sometimes they did not seek relief from this oppressive solitude by singing the beautiful songs of Zion. The one hundred and twenty-second Psalm would be eminently appropriate:

[1] Songs of Degrees, Psalms cxx.–cxxxiv.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good."

Every Christian pilgrim will heartily adopt the sentiments and the language of this beautiful "Song of Degrees of David," as he draws near the gates of Zion, and devoutly "pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

Another thought is quite worth keeping in mind. There is but one other path, perhaps, in all of Palestine in regard to which we can feel so assured that along its length

> Walked those blessed feet,
> Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nail'd,
> For our advantage, on the bitter cross,[1]

for there never has been any other practicable road between Jericho and Jerusalem, for most of the distance, thus far.

Another thought has been much upon my mind. We ride along this road at our ease. Jesus toiled up this great ascent on foot, and, as stated at the well of Jacob, near Samaria, he was no doubt often "wearied with his journey."

Curiously enough, that is the only other road in the country over which we may be quite certain that our Saviour travelled, and, when wearied, sat near the well and rested; "for his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat." I imagine that Jesus may also have rested at the old khân where we propose to lunch.

We have been so deeply absorbed in our conversation that we have not given any attention to the region around us, deserted and barren, without one redeeming feature to relieve the oppressive solitude.

The only change for the better that I notice is this new road,

[1] Shaks. Hen. IV. Act i.

which adds much to the comfort of the rider and his horse. We are now approaching Khân el Ahmar, on the top of a ridge, just where the road lies in a narrow cut through the chalky marl strata common to all this region. Here we will rest and lunch under the shadow of the cliff on our left, where a poor Greek finds a precarious living by supplying hungry and thirsty travellers with coffee, eggs, and bread, and water from the cistern amongst the ruins of the old khân opposite his very primitive establishment. We may infer, from the possibility of keeping such a shop, that this road is much safer now than when I first passed this way in 1833. It was regarded at that time as the most dangerous part of the descent to Jericho; and the murderous attack upon Sir Frederic Henniker, then fresh in the traditions of the place, made one look with a shudder upon the spot where he was shot by the Bedawîn. We are in no danger of such an adventure at present, but the evil reputation of the neighborhood still adds verisimilitude to the parable of the Good Samaritan and the man that "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves."[1] Indeed, this entire region is now, and ever has been, better fitted for the tent of the Bedawîn robber than the home of civilized man; and we may pass through and away from it without regret.

If I mistake not, our road thus far has followed the boundary-line between Judah and Benjamin, as laid down in Joshua xv. 5–7; and our long ascent on the south side of the wild gorge of the Kelt is "the going up to Adummim, which is on the south side of the river."

No doubt "the river" there mentioned is the Kelt, for there is no other; and I think also that this khân marks the site of Adummim. Mr. Drake calls it Khân Hathrûrah, and says that the old castle above it was named Tal'at ed Damm, or Ascent of Blood; and this name retains most of the radical elements of Adummim. It is easy to draw the north border between the two tribes from the mouth of the Jordan to the débouchure of Wady Kelt on the plain, past 'Ain Hajla, and up the wady to this khân at Tal'at ed Damm. From that point "the border" followed the line of the present road to the vicinity of Jerusalem. En-shemesh is probably the 'Ain el

[1] Luke x. 30–37.

Haud which we shall pass at the base of the ascent to Bethany. I still adhere to the old tradition that the next point on the border-line, En-rogel, is at Bîr Eyûb, and not at the fountain of Mary, in the valley of Jehoshaphat. It seems to me that, instead of running northwards, and thereby throwing a large part of the site of Jerusalem into the tribe of Judah instead of Benjamin, the boundary-line appears to have made a deep bend southwards, so as to include Rachel's tomb, which Samuel says was "in the border of Benjamin."[1] The border, it is true, must have returned sharply from the tomb to the north-west, forming a kind of loop made for the specific purpose of including this sepulchre within the tribe of Benjamin. Nor is it difficult to understand and appreciate the motive which led to this unique curve in the boundary. The Benjamites would naturally desire to possess the spot where the father of their tribe was born as "the soul" of his mother was "departing, for she died," and whose solitary sepulchre commemorates the affecting incidents of that sad calamity.

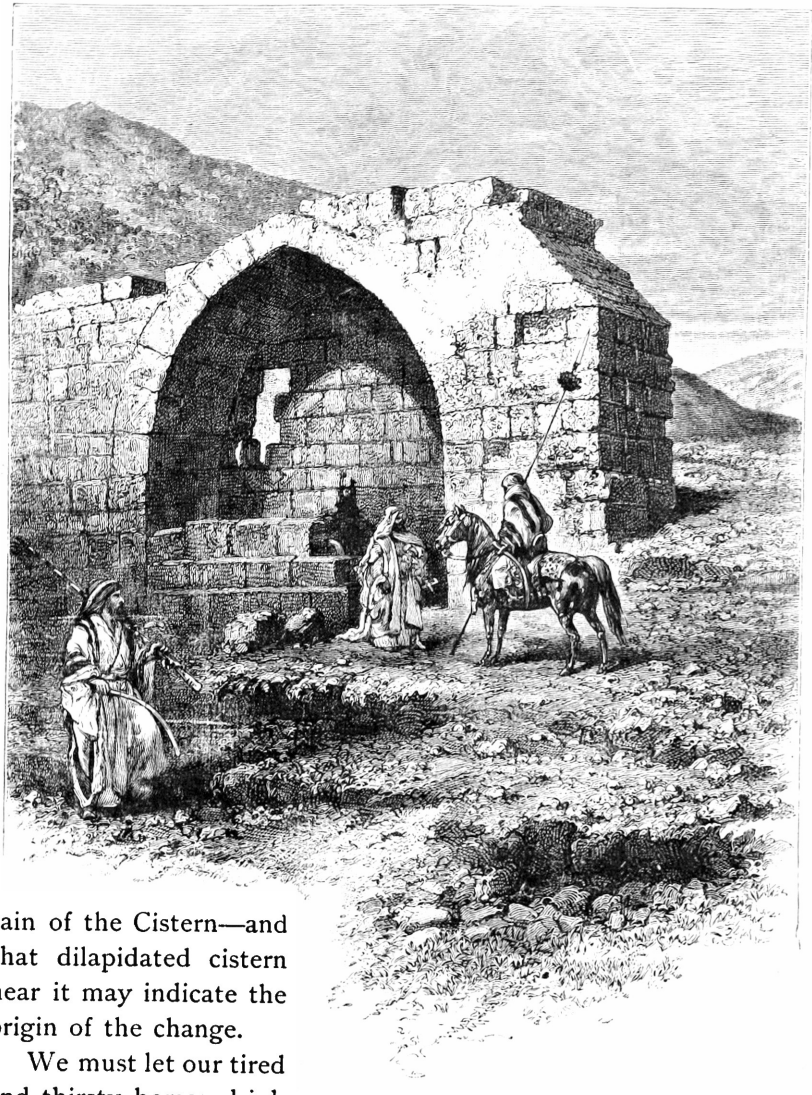
As we come nearer to the mountains that "are round about Jerusalem" I observe that the soil gradually improves, and small patches of growing grain relieve the glare of barren rocks on either side of this winding wady. What is this ruin called which seems to block the way at the head of the valley?

'Ain el Haud, and it also gives name to the valley itself. From it the road turns sharply to the right, and by a long ascent will bring us to Bethany. Thanks to the engineers of the Pasha, we have now a broad and easy graded road instead of the old precipitous and rocky track.

Anything in this neighborhood so rare and so permanent as such a fountain must certainly have had a name and a history in ancient times, but 'Ain el Haud, I think, is not mentioned in the Bible.

Not by that name; but if En-rogel be identified with either Bîr Eyûb, or even with the Fountain of the Virgin in the valley of Jehoshaphat, this 'Ain el Haud may be the En-shemesh of Joshua xv. 7, the next point eastwards of Adummim along the boundary between Judah and Benjamin. If so, the name En-shemesh—Fountain of the Sun—has been changed by the Arabs to 'Ain el Haud—Foun-

[1] 1 Sam. x. 2.



'AIN EL HAUD—EN-SHEMESH.

tain of the Cistern—and that dilapidated cistern near it may indicate the origin of the change.

We must let our tired and thirsty horses drink while we refresh ourselves with this cool water. According to Maundrell, the name was "The Apostles' Fountain, so called because, as the tradition goes, those holy men were wont to refresh themselves here in their frequent travels between Jerusalem and Jericho. And indeed it is a thing

very probable, and no more than I believe is done by all that travel this way, the fountain being close by the road-side, and very inviting to the thirsty traveller."

We are now ascending, you say, the south-eastern spur of Olivet, and in twenty minutes will arrive at Bethany, the home of Martha and her sister and Lazarus, whom Jesus loved. The region round about it is not destitute of beauty; and whatever can or must be said of the village itself, the pictures I have seen of it are worse than the reality.

In contrast with the arid desert through which we have been journeying all day, the appearance is quite refreshing; and I notice evidence of considerable improvement, especially in the fig and olive orchards, since my last visit. There are also a few more houses perched upon the rocky terraces along the shallow wady that descends from the north-west.

You must, of course, see the sepulchre of Lazarus, the so-called house of Martha, that of Simon the leper, and the other traditionary spots of local interest. Salîm can accompany you, as I have no desire to revisit any of them, and will, therefore, await your return under the shade of this fine old fig-tree.

And now that we are again in the saddle, what did you see at Bethany?

After groping my way down some twenty-five steps to the small chamber shown as the tomb of Lazarus, which is entirely unsatisfactory, I had no inclination to follow the custodian to any other legendary locality. I passed by the ruined tower which is the only object in the place that has the slightest claims to antiquity, but it could never have had the remotest connection with Lazarus. Bethany, I believe, does not occupy the site of any town mentioned in the Old Testament.

No, nor even does Josephus refer to it, and, therefore, we may conclude that it was a small hamlet even when our Lord made it his chosen retreat. There are now about forty humble habitations scattered promiscuously over the hill-side, which slopes gently down towards the north-east; and the opposite ridge is clothed with flourishing orchards of fig, olive, and other trees. The ride up the valley to et Tûr, on the top of Olivet, is quite interesting; and I

have often taken it, as it is the shortest road to Jerusalem, and commands the most striking and impressive prospects. We, however, shall follow the southern path, which is now, and probably always has been, the ordinary road.

I am not satisfied thus to pass away from a site so distinguished by the presence, the divine power, and the tender love of the Saviour. Here he was pleased to reveal more of the human side of his complex nature than anywhere else; and to know the compassionate heart of Jesus we must accompany him to Bethany. Here he raised Lazarus from the dead, and from some spot in the vicinity he ascended "into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

True, and the Christian world has never lost sight of this humble resort of our Lord. From the earliest ages of the Church down to the present hour the name and the place have had a peculiar charm to the pious heart. Not much more, however, can be said of the place itself or of its immediate surroundings. There is nothing in these forty hovels, containing fanatical Moslems only, to challenge admiration, or even respect. He who imparted dignity and glory to Bethany is no longer here, and we cannot transfer our reverence and love from him to its present inhabitants. It is well, however, to learn something of the history and fortunes of this lowly resort of the Son of God.

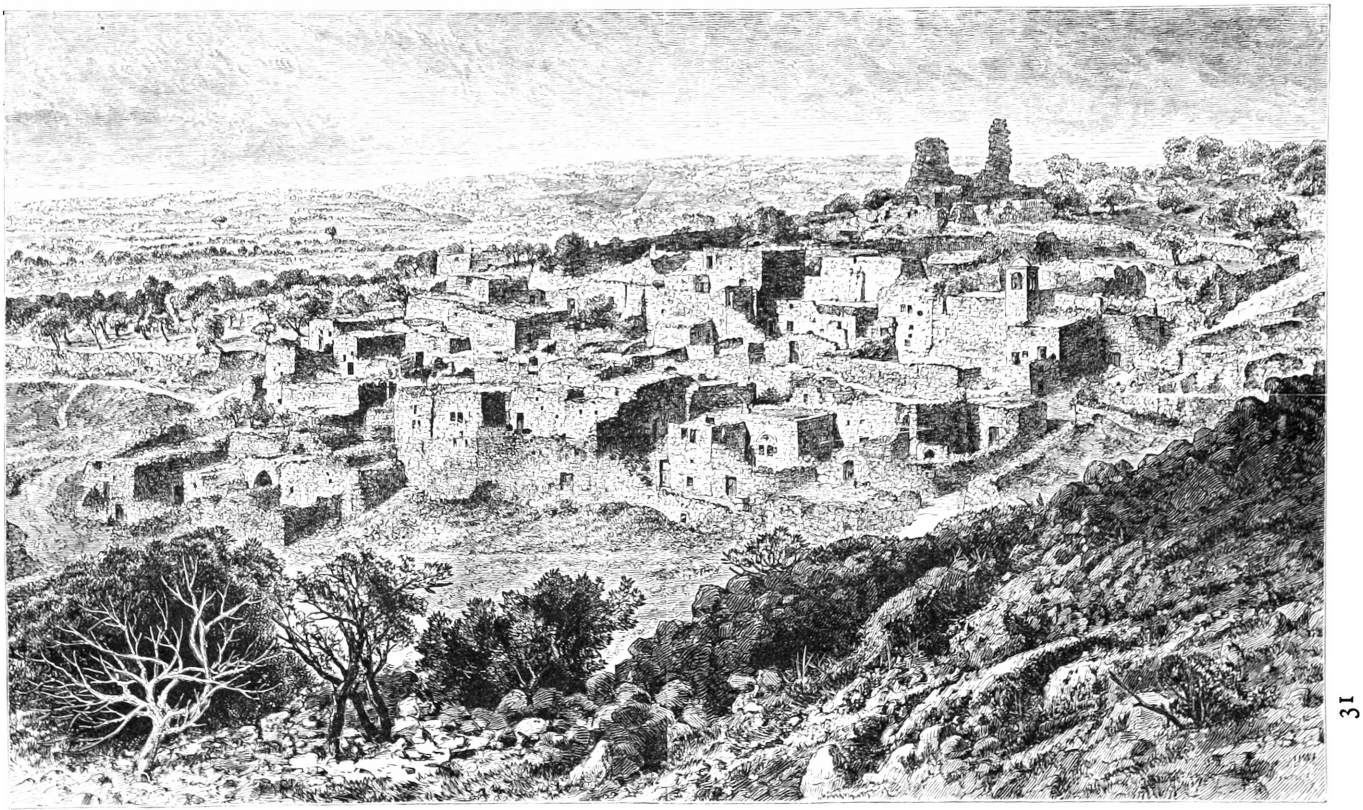
The native Arabs do not know the name Bethany, but call their village el 'Azarîyeh, from el 'Azar, the Arabic for Lazarus. Long before the Moslem conquest of Jerusalem, in the seventh century, there were churches and monasteries erected there upon the sites where Mary and Martha were supposed to have dwelt, and over the reputed grave of Lazarus. These were destroyed by the Moslems after having been used for a time as mosks. During the Crusades religious houses were again built here, and an opulent nunnery was established by Melisinda, the queen of King Fulco, of which her sister Iveta was made abbess. After the expulsion of the Franks from Jerusalem this establishment was, of course, destroyed. Possibly the old castle, whose ruined tower stands out so conspicuously in every picture of Bethany, may have belonged to that nunnery. From that day Bethany has existed, but without a history.

Do you suppose that Jesus and his disciples passed along this lower road to and from Jerusalem?

It is the only public highway between the two places, and there is no reason to presume that it has ever been changed. I believe that this is the identical path which the Saviour followed. Dean Stanley says there can be no doubt about it, and he gives a picturesque description of the triumphal procession of our Lord along this road from Bethany to Jerusalem.[1]

"Two vast streams of people met on that day. The one poured out from the city; and as they came through the gardens, whose clusters of palm rose on the southern corner of Olivet, they cut down the long branches, as was their wont at the Feast of Tabernacles, and moved upwards towards Bethany with loud shouts of welcome. From Bethany streamed forth the crowds who had assembled there on the previous night, and who came testifying to the great event at the sepulchre of Lazarus. The road soon loses sight of Bethany. It is now a rough, but still broad and well-defined, mountain-track, winding over rock and loose stones; a steep declivity below on the left, the sloping shoulder of Olivet above on the right; fig-trees below and above, here and there growing out of the rocky soil. Along the road the multitudes threw down the branches which they cut as they went along, or spread out a rude matting formed of the palm-branches they had already cut as they came out. The larger portion — those, perhaps, who escorted Him from Bethany—unwrapped their loose cloaks from their shoulders, and stretched them along the rude path, to form a momentary carpet as He approached. The two streams met midway. Half of the vast mass, turning round, preceded; the other half followed. Gradually the long procession swept up and over the ridge where first begins 'the descent of the Mount of Olives' towards Jerusalem. At this point the first view is caught of the south-eastern corner of the city. The Temple and the more northern portions are hidden by the slope of Olivet on the right; what is seen is only Mount Zion, now for the most part a rough field, crowned with the Mosk of David, and the angle of the western walls, but then covered with houses to its base, surmounted by the

[1] Matt. xxi. 1–11; Mark xi. 1–11; Luke xix. 29–44; John xii. 12–20.



EL 'AZARİYEH—BETHANY.

Castle of Herod, on the supposed site of the palace of David, from which that portion of Jerusalem, emphatically 'The City of David,' derived its name. It was at this precise point, as He drew near, at 'the descent of the Mount of Olives'—may it not have been from the sight thus opening upon them?—that the shout of triumph burst forth from the multitude, 'Hosanna to the Son of *David!* Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the kingdom that cometh of our father *David.* Hosanna, peace, glory in the highest!' There was a pause as the shout rang through the long defile; and, as the Pharisees who stood by in the crowd complained, He pointed to the 'stones,' which, strewn beneath their feet, would immediately 'cry out' if 'these were to hold their peace.'

"Again the procession advanced. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments, and the path mounts again; it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view. As now the dome of the Mosk el Aksa rises like a ghost from the earth before the traveller stands on the ledge, so then must have risen the Temple-tower; as now the vast enclosure of the Mussulman sanctuary, so then must have spread the Temple-courts; as now the gray town on its broken hills, so then the magnificent city, with its background—long since vanished away—of gardens and suburbs on the western plateau behind. Immediately below was the valley of the Kidron, here seen in its greatest depth as it joins the valley of Hinnom, and thus giving full effect to the great peculiarity of Jerusalem, seen only on its eastern side—its situation as of a city rising out of a deep abyss. It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road—this rocky ledge—was the exact point where the multitude paused again, and 'He, when He beheld the city, wept over it.'"[1]

We have gladly followed thus far the triumphal procession from Bethany, with Dean Stanley for our guide. The picture he so graphically outlines, even though imaginary, is substantially true—the legitimate expansion of the gospel narrative—and the topo-

[1] Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, p. 189–191.

graphical details are vividly accurate; nor can you do better than to fix them at once and forever upon the indelible tablet of your memory.

Let us pause on this smooth ledge of rock, and survey this most impressive panorama.

There is no other in the world of equal interest; and as first impressions are often the most permanent, I am thankful that mine are just such as I wish ever to retain after this my first view of the Holy City.

The evening wanes, and we must seek our tent, pitched under a spreading fig-tree in the open court of a cottage farther up, on the north-west side of the Mount of Olives.

The Mount of Olives, April 26th. Evening.

Our present position commands a comprehensive view of the city, the suburbs, and the scenery round about in all its extent. Most devoutly thankful am I to have reached in health and safety this true capital of the Christian world; and I anticipate many days of profitable activity in walking through the streets of Jerusalem, "the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." I shall need no prompting from prophet or poet to "walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, consider her palaces."[1]

By the arrangement we have made, we shall be able to prolong our walks and rides as best suits our convenience. Before I forget it, however, and ere we retire for the night, I must give you a preliminary warning for your guidance in the study of the many sites and scenes in and around Jerusalem. It is a very discouraging reflection, yet a true one, that on approaching the Holy City you enter upon an arena of great uncertainty and endless controversy. Nearly every author who has written about Jerusalem has some special theory in regard to questions Biblical, theological, topographical, or legendary, which he seeks to explain and defend. With the exception of the general outlines of the city, there is scarcely an

[1] Psa. xlviii. 1, 2, 12, 13.



JERUSALEM, FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

identification which has not been disputed, and the discussions about them have not only been earnest but long, and often acrimonious. Now, you must be on your guard, lest these perplexing controversies rob you of the pleasure and edification which a sojourn here should confer. A friend of mine thus moralizes on this subject, in connection with his visit to Bethany. He had gone there with a party of friends from the city:

"I have never been so painfully impressed as to-day with the importance of the advice not to allow mere topographical controversies to intrude upon the delightful and precious influences which these sacred scenes ought to afford. We not only disputed about the tomb of Lazarus, but fell into an earnest discussion in regard to other matters equally indifferent—as whether Bethphage was east or west of Bethany, at Abu Dîs, or elsewhere. Then came the grand question about the true site of the Ascension, whether near the church at Kefr et Tûr, or on the spur of Olivet, which lies over against Bethany to the north; and thus we walked through scenes suggestive of the most glorious anticipations to the Christian, with scarcely a single profitable reflection."

It would be a serious mistake to allow our minds to be distracted by such topographical speculations. Olivet, including Gethsemane on the west, and Bethany on the east of it, has witnessed the most affecting and the most stupendous scenes in the history of our blessed Redeemer. It was in connection with this mount that the God-man—the divine Logos—chose to reveal more of his human nature than anywhere else on the earth. How often, after the fatigues and temptations of the day in this wicked and captious city, did he retire in the evening to Bethany to enjoy the hospitality and affectionate sympathy of Lazarus and his pious family! There he laid aside the awful character of prophet and teacher divine, to rest his hard-tried energies in the gentle amenities of social life; and such was the freedom of intercourse between these chosen friends, that Martha could even come to him with her little domestic troubles.

Alas! how many Marthas there are, careful and troubled about many things, and how few Marys, anxious to sit at Jesus's feet and hear his word!

As an excuse for this Martha, we should remember that she was the responsible house-keeper, and that she belonged to the class of society in which the women of the family performed the household work with their own hands, and hence it was perfectly natural that she should claim the assistance of her younger sister. What a touching exhibition of lowliness and divine condescension does this reveal! He who was Lord of the universe selects, of choice, the humble poor for his dearest friends and most intimate associates. "He whom thou lovest is sick," was the only message sent by the sorrowing sisters. Most honorable distinction! He whom angels adored, and from heaven to earth hastened to serve, lavishes his richest love upon a poor man called Lazarus. The Son of God groaned in spirit at the sorrow of Mary and Martha. He wept over the grave of his friend. He did more. He asked of the Eternal Father, and received power to raise him from the grave, and, standing at the head of that dark cave, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" Wonderful voice! It startled the dull ear of death, and the inexorable grave heard, "and he that was dead came forth."

Here on Olivet the Christian learns to sing the song of triumph over the King of Terrors: "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" No wonder that "much people of the Jews came [to Bethany], not for Jesus's sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead;" or that on the next day they that were come to the feast should have taken branches of palm-trees and gone forth to meet Jesus, crying, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!"[1] and entered with him into the Holy City.

[1] John xii. 1, 9, 12, 13.

XIV.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

View over the Wilderness of Judæa from Kubbet esh Shuhadah.—Jerusalem from the Minaret of the Mosk at Kefr et Tûr.—Church of the Ascension.—Uncertainty in Regard to the Sites and Scenes of Jerusalem.—Boundaries of Jerusalem.—Mount Moriah.—Mount Zion.—Wilderness of Judæa.—Unwritten Revelation.—Ezekiel's Vision of the Holy Waters.—Allegory of the Mystic River.—Topography of the Allegory.—Church and Tomb of the Virgin Mary.—Sir John Maundeville's Description of them.—The probable Residence of Mary after the Crucifixion.—The Dogma of the Assumption.—Mariolatry.—El Jesmânîyeh, Gethsemane.—Excursion to Sites and Scenes without the City of Jerusalem.—Scopus, where Titus encamped.—Nob, the City of the Priests.—Doeg the Edomite.—Approach of Sennacherib to Jerusalem as described by Isaiah.—Tuleil el Fûl, Gibeah.—Sepulchre of Simon the Just and of the Sanhedrim.—Tombs of the Kings.—Stone Doors described by Maundrell.—Similar Doors found in the ruined Cities of the Haurân.—Tombs of the Judges.—Building the Sepulchres of the Prophets.—Olive-groves North of Jerusalem.—Third Wall.—Russian Hospices.—Modern Suburbs West of Jerusalem.—Birket el Mamilla, Upper Pool of Gihon.—Birket es Sultân, Lower Pool of Gihon.—Necessity of Large Reservoirs in Ancient Times.—Absalom's Hand.—King's Dale.—Valley of Hinnom.—Hill of Evil Council.—Palace of Caiaphas.—Aceldama, the Potter's Field.—'Ain Selwân, Pool of Siloam.—Isaiah's Tree.—Bîr Eyûb, En-rogel.—Absalom, Adonijah, Joab.—Fountain of the Virgin.—Source and Character of its Waters.—Remitting Fountain of Siloam.—Underground Passage from the Virgin's Fountain to the Pool of Siloam explored by Dr. Robinson.—Captain Warren's Survey of this Passage.—Tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

Sunday, April 27th.

I WALKED out early this morning to the top of Olivet, and to the little Moslem wely called Kubbet esh Shuhadah—the Dome of the Witnesses. Once there, it was difficult to break away from the sights and scenes around and below me. Eastwards and southwards the view over the regions through which we have wandered for the last few days was peculiar and impressive even to sadness. It is the Creator's own conception realized of desolation absolute—hills behind hills, sinking far down to the Dead Sea, with Edom and Moab beyond. As the rising sun revealed them, I watched

their worn and haggard features with a strange sort of fascination; for I imagine that it was into that "wilderness" Jesus was "led up of the Spirit" after his baptism in the Jordan—what particular part of it I do not care to know. Enough for me that somewhere on those dreary hills the great Temptation was borne by the suffering Son of God for forty days and forty nights—that there the Prince of Darkness was baffled at every point, and his accursed dominion overthrown forever.

On my way back to the tent I ascended the minaret above the mosk and the so-called Church of the Ascension, and looked down upon the silent sleeping city, lying in deep shadow, and the sight was at the utmost possible remove from the one I had just left. Gradually the shadows dispersed, and the scene brightened, until, at length, the golden sunlight flashed over and glorified the unique assemblage of domes, towers, and minarets.

I am quite aware that neither the mosk nor the church can mark the place from whence our Lord ascended into heaven; for Luke says that "he led them out as far as to Bethany: and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." How came the hierophants to select that site?

It is apparently a very ancient one, reaching back to the visit of Queen Helena; and one of the two churches which she erected in Palestine is believed to have been at this place: the other was at Bethlehem. According to Eusebius, there was here a cave, in which tradition maintains that Jesus initiated his disciples into his secret mysteries; and it was probably to honor this cave that Helena erected the church, and not to indicate the site of the Ascension.

Constantine himself adorned the cave; and from it, no doubt, the original tradition was enlarged, in the course of time, so as to include the Ascension. Dean Stanley suggests that Helena chose the site for a church partly from its commanding position, partly from its vicinity to the cave.

The present church is modern, and scarcely merits a description. It is a small octagonal chapel in the court of the mosk, and both are in a dilapidated condition. Within the chapel the footprint of



MOSK AT KEFR ET TÛR—CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION.

the Saviour, made in the rock when he was about to ascend up to heaven, is shown to devout pilgrims, and has been ever since the seventh century. It has no resemblance whatever to a human foot; and it is humiliating to see the pilgrims bowing to, praying before, and covering with kisses, a forgery so manifest. The Church of the Ascension, but especially the mosk at Kefr et Tûr, owes its present celebrity to the impressive view of the Holy City from the top of the minaret.

Jerusalem, as I saw it from the balcony of that minaret this morning, fulfils all my anticipations. It was the City of the Great King realized; and if a nearer acquaintance is going to dissipate and reverse my present impressions, I do not wish to enter the city, but depart from the Mount of Ascension, carrying away with me the picture already imprinted on my mind.

Such a result is not inevitable, though this is by far the best view you will ever have. Your introduction to the Holy City differs widely from mine. Wearied with a long ride from Jaffa, I approached it from the west when the shadows of evening were

falling heavily over the blank walls and unpicturesque ramparts of Zion. At that time there was not a house outside the walls. I could see nothing of the city but high walls, and entered the gate dissatisfied and sadly disappointed. Subsequently, while residing here, this first impression wore off, and was succeeded by feelings of deep reverence and earnest affection. Be not discouraged, therefore, if you return from the first walk about Zion weary and dejected, with a sensation of disgust tugging desperately at your heart. As you repeat your rambles with less excitement and hurry, and become familiar with the localities and their sacred associations, an intelligent and abiding interest in the very dust and stones of Jerusalem will grow up vigorous and refreshing, you scarcely know how.

At any rate, I am resolved to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the Holy City and its environs.

A very sensible resolution; but I give you fair warning that I am not to be your constant companion. It is no child's play, at this season of the year, to walk or ride down and up Mount Olivet, and explore sites and scenes from the bottom of Jehoshaphat to the top of Zion. Salîm will go with you, and guides in abundance can be procured, and the city is before you. As to other helpers, you are in danger of being bewildered with an embarras des richesses. Not to name the Bible and Josephus, there are Eusebius and Jerome, Reland, Maundrell, Chateaubriand, Williams, Wilson, Schultz, Robinson, and many guide-books and minor works. Charts, plans, and views are equally numerous—Catherwood's, Robinson's, Wilson's, Schultz's, Williams's, British Ordnance Survey, and many others; and you have the living original spread out beneath your eye, and ready to be questioned at all hours of the day and night. Do not set out, however, resolved to make discoveries. There is not a foot of ground that has not been already scrutinized by a thousand eyes as keen as yours; and the old adage, "If true not new, if new not true," may be applied to Jerusalem and her monuments with more propriety than to any other place on earth.

To me everything is invested with the charm of novelty, and I shall taste the pleasure of discovery without claiming any of its honors. Jerusalem is the common property of the whole Christian

world. Zion and Moriah, Olivet and Siloah, Gethsemane and Calvary, belong neither to Greek nor Latin — are neither Papist nor Protestant; and I mean to pursue my rambles and researches with as much freedom and zest as though no eye but mine had ever scanned these sacred sites.

So be it; but do not dream of reaching results in all cases clear and satisfactory even to yourself, much less to others. It may not be amiss to begin your researches by distinctly defining certain names and terms beforehand which will be ever recurring in your study. Remember, you can neither think, speak, nor write about anything accurately without a name for it. Jerusalem, during her long and eventful history, has had many names, either for the entire city or for various parts of it; and there has been much diversity of opinion, and even keen controversy, about several of the most important.

It would be entertaining at least, if not instructive, to submit the topography of Jerusalem and her environs to a conclave composed of devout padres, learned authors, and intelligent professors from Europe and America.

They would scarcely agree on a single point. Every text in the Bible that had any bearing upon its topography would be mystified and confounded. Josephus would be so tortured and twisted and perplexed as not to know what he meant himself; and thus, too, would the "fathers," and every pilgrim and visitor who unfortunately published a sentence about Jerusalem, be treated, and then dismissed from the witness-box as incompetent, or otherwise unworthy of credit. Now learn from this imaginary congress of conflicting theorizers to walk softly over such doubtful territory, and not to dogmatize where the opinions of the learned clash.

It is my own impression that no ingenuity or research can reconstruct this city as our Saviour saw it, or as Josephus describes it. No man knows the line of the eastern and south-eastern portions of the first wall, or where the second began, or how it ran after it began, or where the third wall commenced, or one foot of its circuit afterwards; and of necessity the locations of castles, towers, corners, gates, pools, sepulchres, etc., etc., depending upon supposed starting-points and directions, are merely hypothetical.

One hypothesis may have more probability than another, but all must share the uncertainty which hangs over the data assumed by the theorizers.

Leaving speculations and their results to take care of themselves, may we not find some important points and boundaries about which there can be no reasonable doubt?

Certainly there are such outlines, strongly drawn and ineffaceable, which make it absolutely certain that we have the Holy City, with all its interesting localities, before us. For example, this mount on which our cottage stands is Olivet, without a doubt; the deep valley at its base is the channel of the Kidron; that broad ravine that joins it from the west, at the well of Job, is the valley of Hinnom, which is prolonged northwards and then westwards under the ordinary name of the valley of Gihon. The rocky region lying in between these valleys is the platform of ancient Jerusalem —the whole of it. Within these limits there was nothing else, and beyond them the city never extended. Thus I understand the language of Josephus when he is speaking of Jerusalem, one and entire.

We may go a step farther in generalizing, and with considerable confidence. The platform of Jerusalem is divided into two nearly equal parts by a valley which commences north-west of the Damascus Gate, shallow and broad at first, but deepening rapidly in its course down along the west side of the Temple area, until it unites with the Kidron near the Pool of Siloam. The city, therefore, was built upon two ridges, with a valley between them; and these grand landmarks are perfectly distinct to this day. The eastern ridge is Moriah, on which stood the Temple; the western is Zion, so-called; and the valley between them is that of the Tyropœon, or Cheesemongers. These ridges are nearly parallel to each other, but that of Zion is everywhere the highest of the two; that is, the part of it without the present south wall is much higher than Ophel, which is over against it; the Temple area is lower than that part of Zion which is west of it, and the north-west corner of the city overlooks the whole of the ridge on which the Temple stood. This accords with the express and repeated assertions of Josephus—who, however, never uses the word Zion—that the hill, which sustained

the Upper Market-place, or the Upper City, was much the highest of all. The houses built down the eastern slopes of Zion everywhere face those on the western side of the opposite ridge, and the corresponding rows of houses meet in the intervening valley, just as Josephus represents them to have done in his day. The historian wrote his description with an eye to Titus and the Roman army; and I cannot doubt but that, up to our present point of generalization, we have laid down the outlines of Jerusalem as they saw and conquered it.

If we now proceed from generalities to particulars, we encounter obscurity and perplexing difficulties at every turn; and these thicken around us just in proportion as we descend to details more and more minute. For example, perhaps all planographists of the Holy City agree that the lower part of the interior valley is that of the Cheesemongers; but higher up, where, under the name of Tyropœon, it must define the supposed position of a certain tower, the course of this valley is very earnestly contested. And thus, too, nearly all agree that the broad ridge south of the Jaffa Gate is Mount Zion; but some maintain that it terminates there at the Tower of David, while others believe that it continued up northwards to the Castle of Goliath, and even beyond it. Some authors assume that the Tyropœon commences at the Tower of David, and descends first eastwards and then to the south-east, under the Temple area and down to Siloam, and that traces of such a valley can still be seen. Other eyes absolutely fail to discover it, and their owners say that the rain from heaven and the theodolite of the engineer obstinately refuse to acknowledge any such valley. Some place Acra north of Jaffa Gate, and others north-west of the Temple area. But we need not extend the list of conflicting theories any farther, for it includes nearly every rod of the entire city —the line of every wall, the position of every castle, the name of every pool, the place of every gate, the site of every scene, etc., etc. On most of these questions I have my own opinions, but to state and defend them would be a most wearisome business, and as useless as it would be endless; from which libera nos, Domine.

While upon the summit of Olivet this morning, I was struck with the wonderful contrast between the two views brought into

immediate juxtaposition. Facing eastwards, the eye glanced wearily over leagues of hopeless desert—"the Wilderness of Judæa"—ending in the Sea of Death. Turning to the west, at my feet lay the Holy City, with all its sacred sites, symbolic names, and precious memories—suggestive of peace with God and life eternal in the Jerusalem on high. It seemed not by accident or without a purpose that the Creator here placed the one view over against the other, and raised up a stand-point like the top of this mount, from which both can be contemplated together, and their significant admonitions fully comprehended. I thought of the solemn words of Moses, in his farewell address to the Hebrew nation: "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."[1] In the physical phenomena seen from this mount we may find the natural basis for such expressive language. Look to the left, and nothing appears but evil and cursing, down to the bitter lake of Sodom; while on the right hand you behold with delight the symbols of life and good, and blessing for evermore.

You have meditated and moralized upon a course of thought not only interesting and legitimate, but very appropriate to the day and the place. All around us lie open for our study volumes of unwritten revelation, which we may without presumption peruse and expand. You have glanced at one chapter of it, and we will turn to another, in which the physical features of Jerusalem and the regions round about it are made to furnish the natural basis for one of the most delightful prophecies in the Bible. Read the first twelve verses of the forty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel.

"Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and,

[1] Deut. xxx. 15, 19.

behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."

Do you suppose that the verbal costume of this prophetic allegory was suggested by or drawn from the physical phenomena of the country between the Temple and the Dead Sea?

I so understand it. Ezekiel was a priest, occupied with the Temple service, and therefore perfectly familiar with the outlook from the Temple down the valley of the Kidron out into the desert, and away to the south-east as far as the Dead Sea. He also knew

the different fountains along the valley, and was acquainted with their peculiar character and action, allusion to which is made in the allegory. A brief explanation is needed here. Underneath the platform upon which stood the Temple are cisterns of immense size, and from them, as is supposed, water descends in a small stream to the remitting fountain of Mary. To retain the measurements of the prophet, at the end of the first thousand cubits from where the waters ran out, "the waters were to the ankles." Farther down, near the Pool of Siloam, the stream, much enlarged, reappears; "the waters were to the knees." At the end of the third thousand cubits, below the well of Job, where the water even now bursts out from many places, forming a lively mill-stream, "the waters were to the loins." This, however, only occurs, in our day, during long-continued and heavy rains. I saw such an outflow once, and then many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were gathered there in holiday costume, rejoicing at the rare event, which is believed to promise a prosperous year and abundant harvests. Farther down still other tributaries swell the volume of the stream until it becomes a river, the "waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over."

It should be remembered that the water supply of Jerusalem was far greater in ancient times than it is at present. Ezekiel had probably seen the fountains and streams largely augmented, and this would impart additional verisimilitude to the details of the mystic river whose small beginnings he saw flow out from under the altar of God.

The mechanism of some of Ezekiel's visions was strange and complex—

> Wheels within wheels, with living creatures wedded—

which I could never disentangle or comprehend.

Others, again, were remarkably simple, and rich in beautiful imagery and suggestive drapery. Of this kind is that river which the "man with a line in his hand" showed unto the prophet. There were many things peculiar and significant in its origin, accidents, and attributes.

Its source.—"Behold, waters issued out from under the thresh-

old of the house"—"came down from under, at the south side of the altar."

Its course.—It flowed "towards the east country"—"into the desert"—and entered "into the sea," that is, the Dead Sea. There is no other in that direction; and water issuing from "the south side of the altar" must, by a topographical necessity, flow down the valley of Jehoshaphat, along the bed of the Kidron eastwards into the desert, and thus into the Dead Sea by Wady en Nâr—Valley of Fire—the present name for the gorge of the Kidron.

Its rapid increase.—A mere rill at the beginning, it was to the ankles at the end of the first thousand cubits, to the knees at the second, the loins at the third, and at the fourth thousand it was a river "to swim in, that could not be passed over."

Its effects.—"Everything shall live whither the river cometh." On either bank "grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed." What a contrast to the present banks of the Kidron—a wilderness, blasted as by the curse of God, with nothing to relieve its frightful desolation! But wherever this river from under the sanctuary comes, the desert blossoms, the banks are shaded with trees, and vocal with music of birds. And, more wonderful still, the river "being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed." Now, this Sea of Sodom is so bitter that, although the Jordan and many other streams have been pouring into it their contributions of sweet water for thousands of years, it continues as nauseous and deadly as ever. Nothing lives in it; neither fish, nor reptiles, nor even animalculæ can abide its desperate malignity. But when the waters from the sanctuary come thither, the shores will be robed in green, its depths shall teem with all manner of fish, and "fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many."

This "vision of the holy waters" had, doubtless, a significant explanation.

There are good men, and learned in the Scriptures, who interpret it literally, and maintain that a mighty physical miracle is here predicted; but we find in it only a spiritual allegory, which fore-

shadows miracles of mercy in store for the whole world. That God will cause such a river of actual water to flow down from Mount Moriah to gladden the desert of Judæa and heal the Sea of Sodom, I do not believe. There is another desert and another sea, however, which he will surely redeem and heal—the desert of sin, the sea of spiritual death.

We may discover in this mystic river a comprehensive and delightful exhibition of the scheme of redemption, from its inception to its final consummation. There is good gospel, and much sound and even profound theology in it. Every incident is suggestive, every allusion instructs. The waters flowed out from under the altar, intimating, not darkly, that the stream of divine mercy—the river of life—has its source in sacrifice and death. Until justice is satisfied by the atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God upon the altar, the waters of life cannot flow forth from beneath it. Though the waters first appeared issuing from under the altar, yet the fountain-head was farther back, under the Holy of Holies, beneath the ark and mercy-seat, where abode the Shekinah of God's presence, intimating that the true source of the river of life is in the heart of infinite love. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."[1] Here we find the fountain; but on its way out and down to ruined man the stream must pass under the altar of divine justice. There is, therefore, no other place in the universe whence these emblematic waters could flow forth so appropriately as from under the altar.

Again, this river, small at first, increased rapidly as it flowed onwards; and thus it has been with the river of life. It was a mere rill from Adam to Noah—the waters were to the ankles. From the Deluge to Moses it grew broader and deeper—the waters were unto the knees, and patriarchs with their flocks reposed in green pastures along the verdant banks. From Moses the law-giver to David the sweet singer, it rolled onwards, ever gathering breadth and power, and its shady groves became vocal with psalms and hymns to the God of salvation. And thus it continued to swell, and expand, and deepen, by the addition of many a rill of prophecy and promise, until He came who is both fountain, stream, and mighty river of

[1] 1 John iv. 10.

unfathomable depth, in which all the world may bathe and be cleansed—may drink and thirst no more. Ever since His advent the river has rolled onwards faster and farther into the desert, and thus it will continue until the most distant borders of it shall blossom, and even the great dead sea of sin shall be swallowed up of life. This divine allegory foreshadows the millennium in its amplest acceptation.

From the physical topography of that region the waters of the allegory could only descend into the vale of the Kidron and run eastwards towards the Dead Sea through a hopeless desert, and what it was twenty-five centuries ago to the eye of the prophet it is now to the weary traveller.

That sea figures largely in the allegory, and well it may. The whole world affords no other type of human apostasy so significant. There it lies in its sulphurous sepulchre, thirteen hundred feet below the ocean, steaming up like a huge caldron of smouldering bitumen and brimstone. Neither rain from heaven, nor mountain torrents, nor Jordan's flood, nor all combined, can change its character of death. Fit symbol of that sea of depravity and corruption which nothing human can heal. Science and art, education and philosophy, legislation and superstition, may pour their united contributions into it forever, but they cannot even mitigate its malignity. The supernatural streams of divine mercy can alone do that. Let the world-wide desert rejoice. Those waters, ever rolling onwards, will surely reach its utmost borders, and clothe its sterile wastes with beauty and life.

Where are those miry and marshy places, mentioned in the eleventh verse, which could not be healed, and what may they signify?

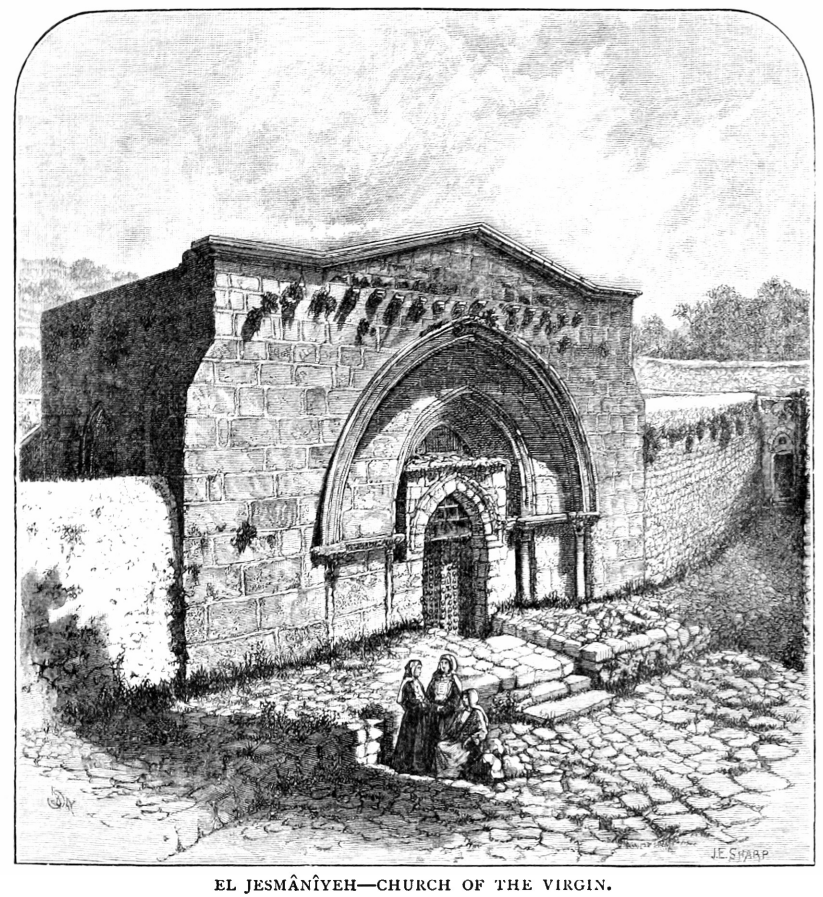
They are along the southern shore of the Dead Sea, at the base of Jebel Usdum, that strange mountain of rock-salt. It is interesting to notice the accuracy of the prophet in his topographical allusions. The existence of those salt marshes has but recently been revealed to the world by modern exploration, but Ezekiel was acquainted with them twenty-three centuries ago. If you wish to attach significance to every item in the drapery of the allegory, the strata of rock-salt, with their incurable marshes, may represent that

original taint of man's nature which will remain even during millennial peace and purity. The waters from the sanctuary do not heal such marshes, because they do not come to them. Wherever the waters come there is life, but they were never intended to reach up to those rock-salt sources of bitterness and death. In the full splendor of millennial glory they will still be impure, and would quickly flood the world with death, did not the waters from the sanctuary continue evermore to flow on and renew the spiritual life. With the aid of the prophet's marvellous vision I delight to look down the vista of this mystic river, and out upon the world's glorious future. None other discloses such prospects, nor are they "dissolving views," fair but fading. More than meets the eye lies deeply concealed, and brighter days than fancy paints shall surely dawn on earth's long and dismal night.

Sunday, April 27th. Evening.

I walked down to the Garden of Gethsemane this evening, and, finding the Church of the Virgin Mary, a short distance north of the garden, open, went in there. As the service was almost immediately brought to a close, I had no opportunity to examine the various localities which impart so much sanctity to the place.

I have had more than one opportunity to examine the church and sepulchre of Mary, called el Jesmânîyeh by the natives. There is a descent of sixty steps to the church, which, consequently, lies almost entirely under the bed of the valley of Jehoshaphat. The steps, however, are partly outside and partly within the door-way which leads down to the body of the church. Seen from above, when this descending passage is lighted up, the church presents a striking appearance. On the right of the descent are shown the chapel and tombs of Joachim and Anna; that of Joseph on the left; and towards the east, in the church, is the supposed tomb of Mary, bearing a general resemblance to the Holy Sepulchre, and probably modelled after its pattern. The various altars witness to the religious divisions of Christendom, and the joint occupation of the church by the different sects contributes to perpetuate their miserable feuds; nor does the influence of Gethsemane, which is hard by, seem to allay their animosity or to inculcate Christian charity.



EL JESMÂNÎYEH—CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN.

Sir John Maundeville, who was here nearly six centuries ago, thus discourses about this church, with his usual mixture of fact and fable: "In the middle of the valley of Jehoshaphat is the Church of Our Lady, which is forty-three steps below the sepulchre of Our Lady, who was seventy-two years of age when she died. Beside the sepulchre of Our Lady is an altar, where our Lord forgave St. Peter all his sins. From thence, towards the west, under an altar, is a well which comes out of the river of Paradise. You must know that that church is very low in the earth, and a part is quite within the earth; but I imagine that it was not founded so. But since Jerusalem has often been destroyed, and the walls beaten

down and tumbled into the valley, and that they have been so filled again, and the ground raised, for that reason the church is so low within the earth. Nevertheless, men say there commonly that the earth hath so been cloven since the time that Our Lady was buried there; and men also say there that it grows and increases every day, without doubt."[1]

Maundeville is quite correct about the church being low in the earth. It is, in fact, a large and curious chapel and sepulchre, and the reason for its construction in such a manner is unknown. As the site is in the bed of the Kidron, one not acquainted with that valley might very naturally conclude that the edifice originally was entirely above the level of the surrounding land, and that the ground grew and increased every day, or that the bed of the Kidron had been filled up by the wash of the brook to its present level about the church. But this can hardly be admitted, for there is no running brook in the valley, and no drift of any kind. The earth is no higher now about the building than it was six hundred years ago, and the oldest traditions represent it as a subterranean chapel, though constructed partly above the surface of the valley. It dates back, probably, to the days of the monastery at Bethany. Previous to the twelfth century it was a spot of traditionary interest, venerated alike by Crusader and Saracen. The Khalif 'Omar is said to have prayed there, and Moslems retain a prayer-niche in the church to this day.

Of course, there is not the slightest reason to believe that the mother of our Lord was buried there; but to this place, doubtless, the dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin owes its origin; and not far from the present church, and close to the Garden of Gethsemane, the spot is shown from whence it is said that the Virgin Mary was carried, by an angelic host, from earth to heaven.

Of the life of Mary subsequent to the time of the crucifixion we know nothing. If she remained at Jerusalem in the family of the Apostle John until her death, she was no doubt buried by faithful and affectionate friends in some quiet and retired spot. If she removed with the apostle to Ephesus, and died there, her sepulchre was, perhaps, near that city; and such was the decision of the Third

[1] Early Travels, p. 176.

General Council. The opinion, however, that has the greatest probability is that Jerusalem was the place of her death and burial. The Apostle John was here at the council of the "apostles and elders and brethren," to meet Paul and Barnabas, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, about A.D. 50 or 52; and Mary must have then been between sixty-five and seventy years of age. If St. John subsequently went to Babylon, before removing to Ephesus, as many suppose, it is highly probable that he had fulfilled the honorable mission of our Lord in respect to the care of his mother, and that it was only after her decease that he left Jerusalem.

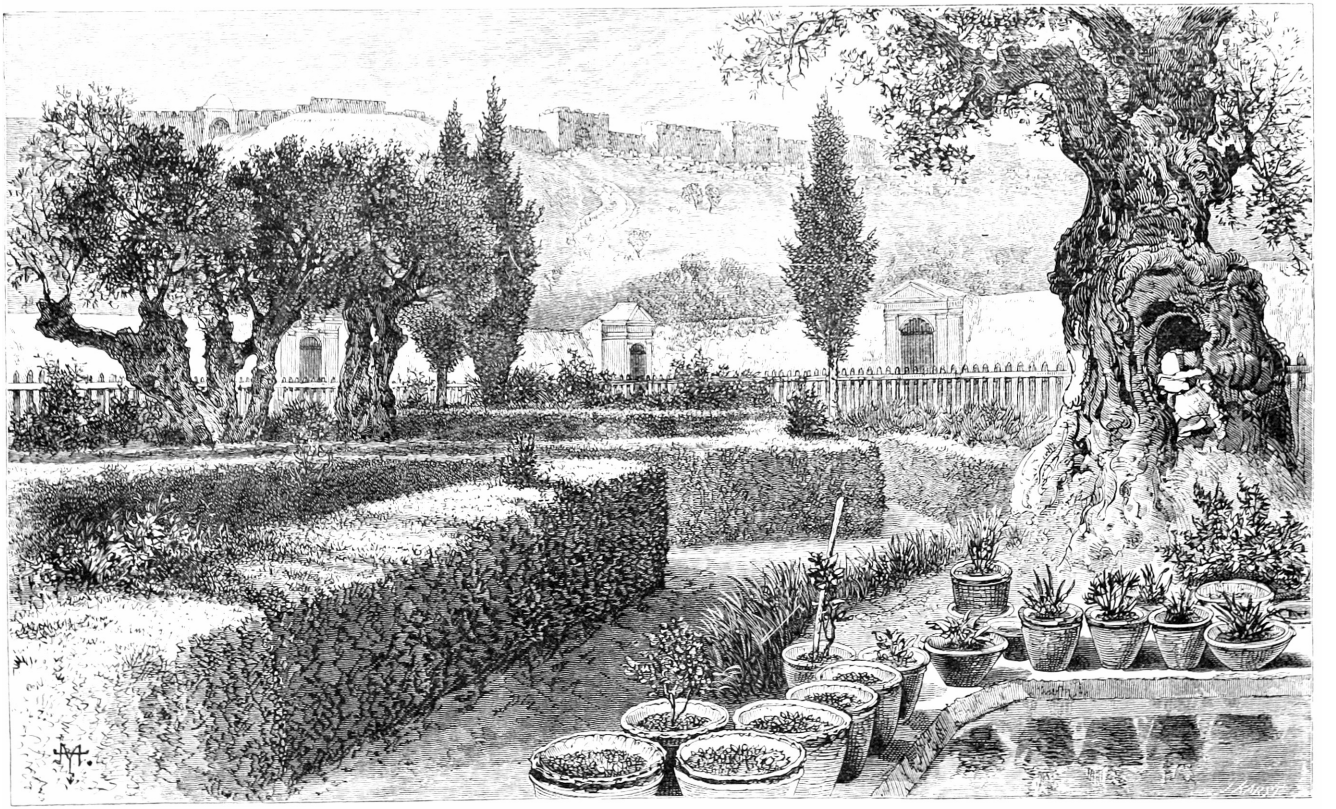
The extraordinary prominence given to the Virgin Mary by a large part of the Christian world down to the present day, imparts great importance to such speculations. Many thousand volumes have been written in regard to them, and in the glorification of Mary. The most astounding traditions have been invented, circulated, and believed, and have received the solemn sanction of great councils, even in this last half of the nineteenth century. By the decrees of the Vatican Council, presided over by the late pope, Pio Nono, the dogma of the Assumption has passed from the realm of poetry and devotion into literal doctrine, which all must accept, or fall under the anathema maranatha of the infallible pope. In a very large part of nominal Christendom the religion of Jesus Christ has degenerated into practical Mariolatry, and therefore this subject assumes a gravity and magnitude beyond its intrinsic value and importance. This lavish love for Mary, and vehement devotion to her service, does not receive the slightest sanction from the inspired Word of God. She was indeed the "highly favored," the "blessed among women;"[1] and, while protesting against her idolatrous worship, we would earnestly guard against thought or word that can be construed into want of respect and just regard for the mother of the Word-Made-Flesh when he took upon himself our nature, and came to dwell amongst men.

From the subterranean church and sepulchre of Mary I went to the so-called Garden of Gethsemane, a short distance to the southeast of it; and, as the gate happened to be open, I spent some time within the enclosure.

[1] Luke i. 28.

The authenticity of that sacred garden Mr. Williams, in his "Holy City," says he chooses rather to believe than to defend. I do not even choose to believe. When I first came to Jerusalem, and for many years afterwards, that plot of ground was open to all whenever they desired to enter and meditate beneath its venerable olive-trees. The Latins, however, have succeeded in gaining sole possession of it. They have built a high wall around it, plastered and whitewashed; planted it with trees; laid out hedges and flower-beds; and seem disposed to make it like a modern pleasure-garden instead of the secluded spot one naturally supposes it was when our Lord retired thither with his disciples on that mournful night of his "agony." Whatever may be thought of this idea, all travellers regret the exclusiveness which makes access difficult, and renders it impossible for most of them to visit the spot at all. The Greeks have invented another site a little north of it, and, of course, contend that they have the true Gethsemane. My own impression is that both are wrong. The position is too near the city, and so close to what must have always been the great thoroughfare eastwards, that our Lord would scarcely have selected it for retirement on that momentous and anxious night. In the broad recess of the valley of the Kidron, north-east of the Church of Mary, there must have been gardens far larger and more secluded; and it is nearly certain that all such places around the city were thrown open, during the great feasts, for the accommodation of the pilgrims, so that Jesus could select the one best adapted to the purpose for which he retired from the crowded city. I am inclined, therefore, to locate the garden in the vale several hundred yards to the north-east of the present Gethsemane, in some secluded spot which I hope will remain forever undisturbed by the idolatrous intrusion of all sects and denominations. The traditions in favor of the present location, however old, have but little weight, and fail to convince the mind; and there is no reason to think that a single tree, bush, or stone now found there had any connection with the mysterious agony of the Son of God, when "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

Two spots without the garden are regarded with special reverence: the Grotto of the Agony, close to the Church of the Virgin,



EL JESMÂNÎYEH—GETHSEMANE.

a dark cavern, at one end of which — the traditional site of the agony — a slab with a Latin inscription is shown; and the rocky bank near the door of the garden, the place where the three apostles, Peter, James, and John, slept on their watch during the agony. The "terra damnata," where Judas betrayed the Redeemer, is a little farther south, and is looked upon with the utmost detestation by all classes and creeds.

Dr. Robinson, with his usual attention to details, thus describes "the place fixed on by early tradition as the site of the Garden of Gethsemane:"

"It is a plot of ground, nearly square, enclosed by an ordinary stone wall. The north-west corner is one hundred and forty-five feet distant from the bridge. The west side measures one hundred and sixty feet in length, and the north side one hundred and fifty feet. Within this enclosure are eight very old olive-trees, with stones thrown together around their trunks. There is nothing peculiar in this plot to mark it as Gethsemane, for adjacent to it are other similar enclosures, and many olive-trees equally old. The spot was, not improbably, fixed upon during the visit of Helena to Jerusalem, A.D. 326, when the places of the crucifixion and resurrection were supposed to be identified. Before that time no such tradition is alluded to. Eusebius, writing, apparently, a few years afterwards, says Gethsemane was *at* the Mount of Olives, and was then a place of prayer for the faithful. Sixty years or more afterwards Jerome places it at the foot of the mountain, and says a church had been built over it, which is also mentioned by Theophanes as existing near the end of the seventh century. The garden is likewise spoken of by Antoninus Martyr at the end of the sixth century, by Adamnanus, and by writers at the time of the Crusades. There would seem, therefore, little reason to doubt that the present site is the same to which Eusebius alludes. Whether it is the true site is, perhaps, a matter of more question.

"Giving myself up to the impressions of the moment, I sat down here for a time alone beneath one of the aged trees. All was silent and solitary around; only a herd of goats were feeding not far off, and a few flocks of sheep grazing on the side of the mountain. High above towered the dead walls of the city, through

which there penetrated no sound of human life. It was almost like the stillness and loneliness of the desert. Here, or, at least, not far off, the Saviour endured that 'agony and bloody sweat' which was connected with the redemption of the world; and here in deep submission he prayed, 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done!'"[1]

Even if the present garden was the true site, in no place on the earth, perhaps, would reverential silence be more becoming than in Gethsemane, where the Son of God was crushed to the earth in that mysterious agony. He trode the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. Though we cannot comprehend the full significance of that hour, we can meditate in wonder and adore.

'Tis midnight; in the garden now
The suffering Saviour prays alone.

'Tis midnight; and from all removed,
The Saviour wrestles lone with fears;
E'en that disciple whom he loved
Heeds not his Master's grief and tears.

'Tis midnight; and for others' guilt
The Man of Sorrows weeps in blood;
Yet he that hath in anguish knelt
Is not forsaken by his God.

April 28th.

In a city like Jerusalem, where all objects are historic, and many typical and symbolic, it is well to see every locality, and not allow any important site to escape examination.

Even the topography of the surrounding country is invested with special interest, and it will be advantageous, I think, to visit the most prominent places outside the walls, as a preliminary preparation for the study of the localities that will claim attention within them. Let us, therefore, devote this day to a prolonged excursion around the Holy City.

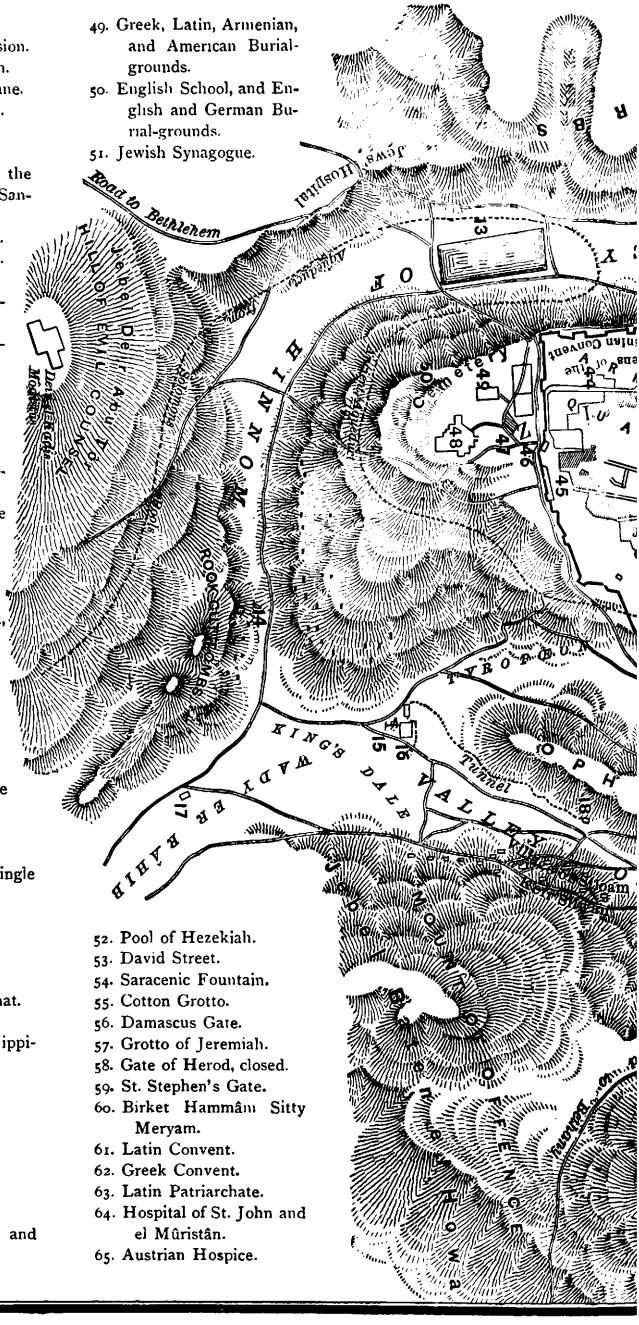
Dr. Robinson, I see, is inclined to locate the priestly city of Nob on the northern termination of Olivet. Can we not take that site on our way?

It will come naturally into the route we propose to take in

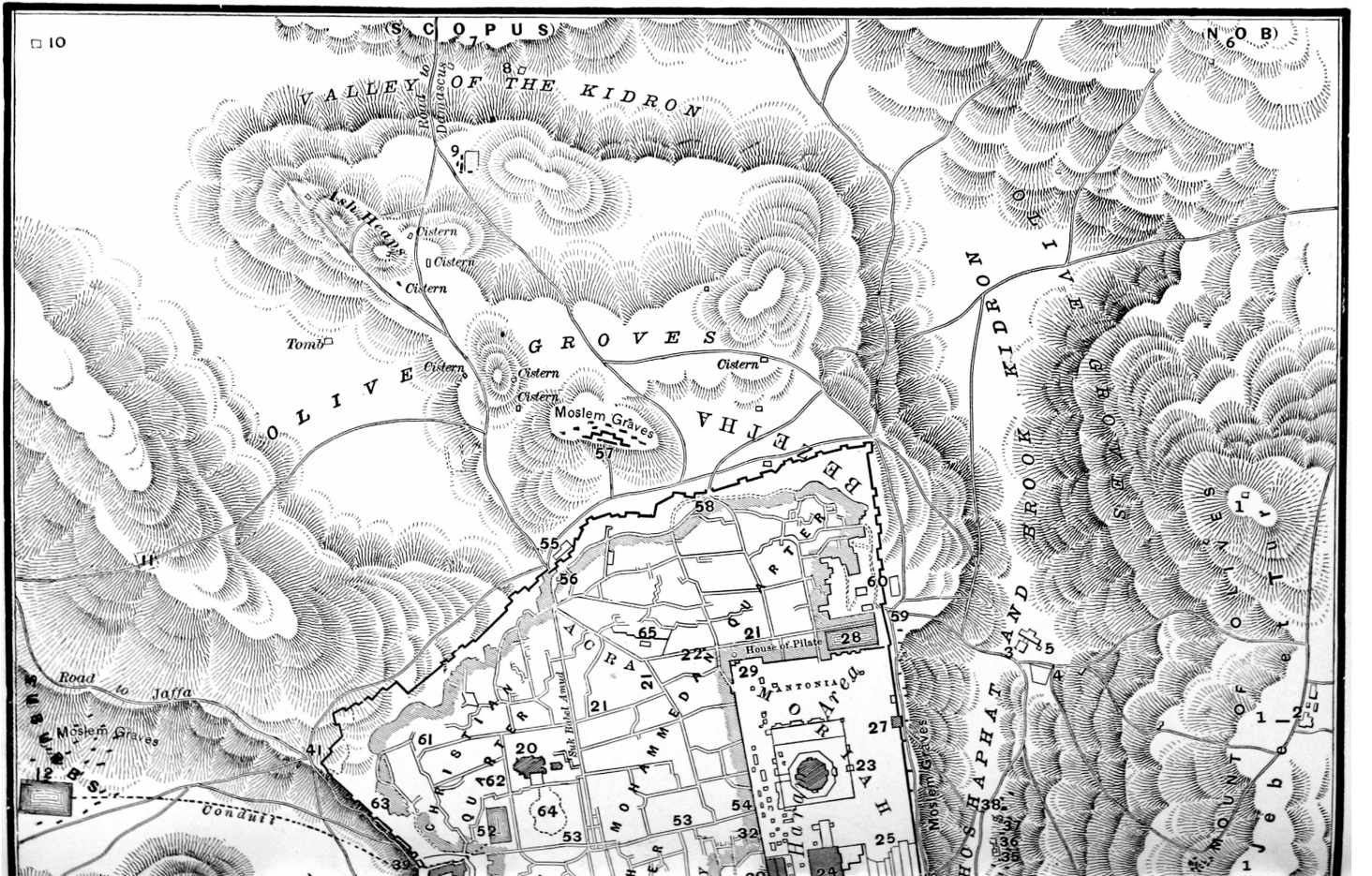
[1] Matt. xxvi. 42; Rob. Res. vol. i. p. 234, 235.

PLAN OF JERUSALEM, AND ITS ENVIRONS.

1. Mount of Olives.
2. Church of the Ascension.
3. Church of the Virgin.
4. Garden of Gethsemane.
5. Grotto of the Agony.
6. Nob.
7. Scopus.
8. Tombs of Simeon the Just and of the Sanhedrim.
9. Tombs of the Kings.
10. Tombs of the Judges.
11. Russian Buildings.
12. Upper Pool of Gihon.
13. Lower Pool of Gihon.
14. Potter's Field.
15. Isaiah's Tree.
16. Pool of Siloam.
17. En-rogel.
18. Fountain of the Virgin.
19. South-eastern Angle of the Haram.
20. Holy Sepulchre.
21. Via Dolorosa.
22. Ecce Homo Arch.
23. Dome of the Rock, and Haram Area.
24. Mosk of el Aksa.
25. Vaults.
26. Solomon's Porch.
27. Golden Gate.
28. Pool of Bethesda.
29. Tower of Antonia.
30. Wailing-place of the Jews.
31. Robinson's Arch.
32. Wilson's Arch.
33. Double, Triple, Single Gates, closed.
34. Gate of the Moors.
35. Tomb of Zechariah.
36. Tomb of St. James.
37. Tomb of Absalom.
38. Tomb of Jehoshaphat.
39. Jaffa Gate.
40. Tower of David, Hippicus.
41. Castle of Goliath.
42. English Church.
43. Barracks.
44. Armenian Convent.
45. Lepers' Village.
46. Zion Gate.
47. House of Caiaphas.
48. The Cœnaculum, and Tomb of David.
49. Greek, Latin, Armenian, and American Burial-grounds.
50. English School, and English and German Burial-grounds.
51. Jewish Synagogue.



52. Pool of Hezekiah.
53. David Street.
54. Saracenic Fountain.
55. Cotton Grotto.
56. Damascus Gate.
57. Grotto of Jeremiah.
58. Gate of Herod, closed.
59. St. Stephen's Gate.
60. Birket Hammâm Sitty Meryam.
61. Latin Convent.
62. Greek Convent.
63. Latin Patriarchate.
64. Hospital of St. John and el Mûristân.
65. Austrian Hospice.


(S.) C O P U S
(N O B)
□ 10
VALLEY OF THE KIDRON
Road to Damascus
Ash Heaps
Cistern
Cistern
Cistern
Tomb
OLIVE GROVES
Cistern
Cistern
Cistern
Cistern
Moslem Graves
BETHPHA
BROOK KIDRON
Valley of
Valley of
Road to Jaffa
Moslem Graves
Tombs
Convent
CHRISTIAN QUARTER
Sick Hotel Amrud
AGRA
MOHAMMEDAN QUARTER
PETRA
House of Pilate
ANTONIA
Area
HARAM
Moslem Graves
HOSHAPHAT
Valley of
Mount of
Jebel et Tur

order to reach the place where Titus is supposed to have pitched his camp on approaching the Holy City, and from which he had his first view of it. Just where this must have been is clearly indicated by Josephus in his account of the invasion. The Roman army marched along the great highway from the north, and encamped on Scopus, which was only seven furlongs from the wall of Jerusalem—probably the so-called third wall which Agrippa had partly erected. Scopus was not actually upon any part of Olivet, for the famous Tenth Legion that came up from Jericho took its station upon that mount. The camp of Titus, therefore, must have been to the north-west of Olivet, yet so near to it as to render easy and safe the communication between the different stations of his army.

From the elevated platform on the north end of Olivet the generally accepted site of Scopus is distinctly seen; and Lieutenant Conder describes a plateau immediately to the right of the road from Jerusalem to Nâblus which is three hundred yards wide, and extends eight hundred yards towards the east; and from the rocky ridge connected with it on the south Jerusalem is visible in its full extent, and all the region round about it.[1] I am disposed to accept the identification; and I think, also, that the site of Nob was somewhere between that place and the north-west termination of Olivet. Much has been written of late by members of the Palestine Exploration Fund, and others, in reference to the site of that city of the priests which was destroyed by command of King Saul.

That was an atrocious tragedy; for when "the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord, the king said to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod. And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword."[2] As this happened nearly three thousand years ago, and every trace of Nob has been lost for a hundred generations, what authority is there for locating it on or near the northern end of Olivet?

[1] See Frontispiece to this volume.

[2] 1 Sam. xxii. 17–19.

The only passage in the Bible that points to this conclusion is found in the graphic description given by Isaiah of the approach of Sennacherib's army towards Jerusalem.[1] It is poetry, no doubt; but probably the topography is accurate, and intended to present a vivid picture of the rapidly advancing calamity. Lowth, in his translation, seeks to retain the poetic vehemence and fervid brevity of the original, and Dr. Hackett has improved on Lowth in that respect:

He comes to Ai, passes through Migron,
At Michmash deposits his baggage;
They cross the pass; Geba is our night-station.
Terrified is Ramah; Gibeah of Saul flees.
Shriek with thy voice, daughter of Gallim;
Listen, O Laish! Ah, poor Anathoth!
Madmenah escapes, dwellers in Gebim take flight.
Yet this day he halts at Nob;
He shakes his hand against the mount, daughter of Zion,
The hill of Jerusalem.

The sites of some of the places named have not yet been identified, but Michmash, Geba, Ramah, Gibeah, and Anathoth are well known; and every one acquainted with the topography of this neighborhood will see at a glance that Sennacherib, for some reason not indicated, selected a line of march considerably to the east of the regular road by Bethel and Beeroth. The places mentioned are all east of that highway, and consequently he would approach Jerusalem along a route that would bring him naturally to some point near the north-west base of Olivet. From there he saw the Holy City, and that place was Nob.

Dr. Porter thinks he discovered the exact site on a conical hill less than a mile south of Tuleil el Fûl, or Dr. Robinson's Gibeah. He may be correct; and when it is remembered that Nob was only a short distance north of the valley of Jehoshaphat, and on or east of the public highway to Bîreh and Beitîn—Beeroth and Bethel—the area within which it must have been situated is so contracted that it is of little importance what precise point be selected. It may have been at Dr. Porter's nameless tell, or on some other position in that vicinity from which Jerusalem is visible.

[1] Isa. x. 28–32.

Poor Anathoth is some three miles distant on the right, but hidden by intervening ridges; Tuleil el Fûl — Gibeah — is on the left; Ramah and Geba are farther north, and close together; and Michmash is north-east of Geba. The entire region up to the northern end of Olivet must have been occupied and overspread by the vast army of Sennacherib, and he himself came so near as to see the Holy City distinctly; and in his rage "he shakes his hand against the mount, daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem." The exact site of Nob will probably never be known. It was doubtless a small place, and no ruins remain by which its position can be verified.

Having taken this general survey of the regions around the north end of the Mount of Olives, we will descend into the upper vale of Jehoshaphat, to where it makes a sharp turn westwards, and then visit the so-called Tombs of the Kings.

The path now follows the valley of the Kidron; and did not our programme include quite too many sites for a single day, we might spend an hour on the way to those tombs in exploring the sepulchres of Simon the Just and of the Sanhedrim.

Those curious sepulchres are rarely visited. They are in the valley of the Kidron, a short distance north-east of the tombs of the kings, and under the cliffs on the north side of the wady. They are frequented exclusively by the Jews, and mostly on their festival days. I once entered them on the thirty-third day after the Passover — a day consecrated to the honor of Simon. Many Jews were there with their children. Like all other sects in the East, they make vows to shave off the hair from their own and their children's heads in honor of some saint or shrine. A number had that day been shorn, the hair weighed, and a sum of money distributed to the poor in proportion to the weight. The surrounding fields and olive-orchards were crowded with gayly-dressed and merry Hebrews. The tombs seemed to me to have been excavated in what were originally natural caves. The entrance to all of them was very low, and without ornament. The interior was spacious and gloomy in the extreme, especially that which was said to have contained the remains of the Sanhedrim. There were between sixty and seventy niches where bodies may have been

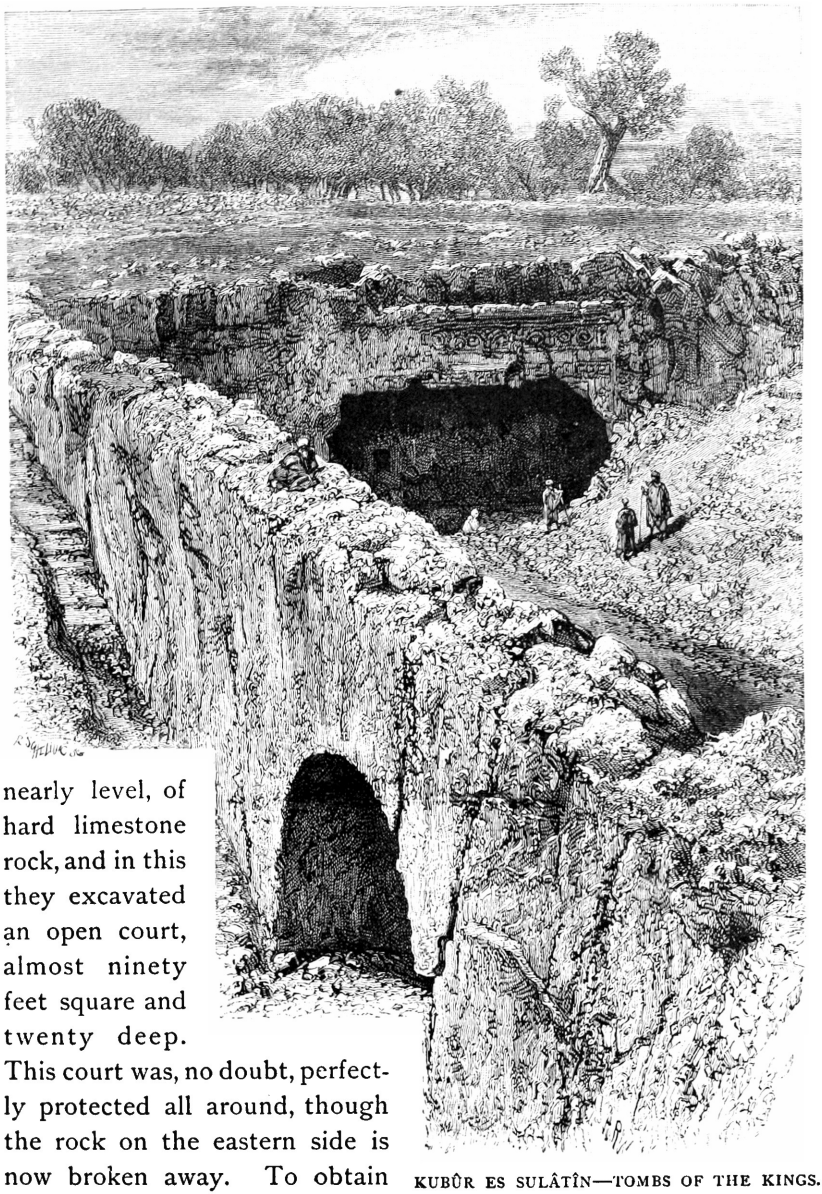
placed; and from that number, perhaps, the idea originated that they were the crypts of the seventy men of the great synagogue. Dr. Wilson seems to have heard of these tombs, but he confounds them with those of the judges, which are a mile or more to the north-west.

Rock-hewn sepulchres form one of the striking features of Jerusalem and its immediate neighborhood, and many of them are well worth visiting. Almost everywhere within and without the city, when the accumulated rubbish is removed, these tombs are found, generally hewn into the perpendicular face of the rock. They are of all sizes and shapes. Some are merely single rock-graves; others are excavated rooms, entered by a door in front, and having two, three, or more niches for the bodies; others, again, are much more extensive—regular catacombs, room within and beyond room, and each having several niches. The best examples of these are the tombs of the kings and those of the judges. Those of the kings, which we have come to see, are here on our left, in the olive-grove about half a mile north of Jerusalem, and a few rods east of the road to Nâblus.

The examination of them requires considerable time, and in this hot weather will be quite fatiguing. I have been through them repeatedly, and have no desire to renew my acquaintance. Salîm has brought candles, without which your visit would be an utter failure, since the interior is as dark as midnight. He has also been here before, and knows the way; so that you will neither get lost nor miss seeing the entire series of chambers, niches, and narrow passages which together constitute this remarkable group of sepulchres.

You did well not to enter those suffocating chambers; but one who, like myself, has never before seen anything resembling such tombs, is abundantly rewarded for the effort required to examine them. They are so complicated, however, that I have only a confused recollection of dark rooms, narrow loculi, and passages leading in all directions.

As we pursue our ride I can assist you to gain and retain a more satisfactory conception of the bewildering catacombs you have just left. Those who made these tombs selected a platform,



KUBÛR ES SULÂTÎN—TOMBS OF THE KINGS.

nearly level, of hard limestone rock, and in this they excavated an open court, almost ninety feet square and twenty deep. This court was, no doubt, perfectly protected all around, though the rock on the eastern side is now broken away. To obtain access to the court a trench was cut on the south side of it, having a gradual slope eastwards. Near the eastern end of this trench was an arched door-way, cut through

the solid rock, opening into the court, which I suppose was originally the only entrance. On the west side of it is a portico thirty-nine feet long, seventeen feet wide, and fifteen high, measuring from the rock floor. The front of this portico was originally ornamented with grapes, garlands, and festoons, beautifully wrought on the cornice; and the two columns in the centre, and the pilasters at the corners, appear to have resembled the Corinthian order. A very low door in the south end of the portico opens into the antechamber, nineteen feet square and seven or eight high. From this three passages conduct into other rooms, two of them to the south, which are about twelve feet square, and have each five or six crypts. On the west is a room thirteen feet square, and a passage leads from it down several steps into a large vault running north, where are crypts parallel to the sides. These rooms are all cut in intensely hard rock; and the entrances were originally closed with stone doors, wrought with panels and hung on stone hinges, which are now all broken. The whole series of tombs indicates the hand of royalty and the leisure of years, but by whom and for whom they were made is a mere matter of conjecture. I know of no good reason for ascribing them to Helena, queen of Adiabene, or for making them the sepulchres of the Asmonean kings.

Maundrell speaks of the stone doors, one of which was still in its place when he was here in A.D. 1697, and he thus describes it:

"But the most surprising thing belonging to these subterraneous chambers was their doors, of which there is only one that remains hanging, being left, as it were, on purpose to puzzle the beholders. It consisted of a plank of stone, about six inches in thickness, and in its other dimensions equalling the size of an ordinary door, or somewhat less. It was carved in such a manner as to resemble a piece of wainscot. The stone of which it was made was visibly of the same kind with the whole rock, and it turned upon two hinges in the nature of axles. These hinges were of the same entire piece of stone with the door, and were contained in two holes of the immovable rock, one at the top, the other at the bottom.

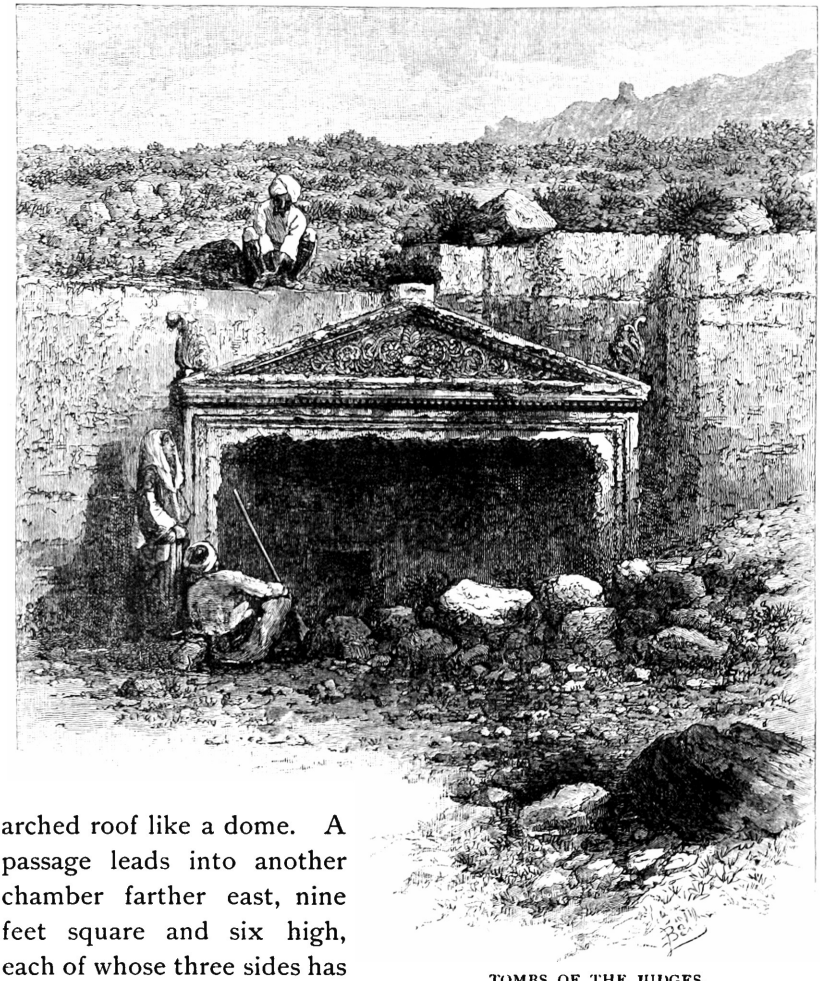
"From this description it is obvious to start a question how such doors as these were made: whether they were cut out of the rock in the same place and manner as they now hang, or whether

they were brought and fixed in their station like other doors? One of these must be supposed to have been done; and whichsoever part we choose as most probable, it seems, at first glance, to be not without its difficulty. But thus much I have to say for the resolving of this riddle (which is wont to create no small dispute amongst pilgrims), viz., that the door which was left hanging did not touch its lintel by at least two inches, so that I believe it might easily have been lifted up and unhinged; and the doors which had been thrown down had their hinges at the upper end twice as long as those at the bottom, which seems to intimate pretty plainly by what method this work was accomplished."[1]

I have seen many stone doors in the ruined cities of the Haurân, and the explanation given by Maundrell is undoubtedly the correct one. The upper hinge was always long enough to allow the door to be lifted sufficiently to set free the lower hinge from its socket, and thus the door could be removed and replaced again in its position.

The tombs of the judges are about a mile north-west of the tombs of the kings, and I will describe them on the way there, that you may be prepared to examine them with greater satisfaction. They are on the north side of the vale of the upper Kidron, and the surrounding region is rough and rocky. The vestibule in front of them is twelve feet wide, open in front, and surmounted by a fine pediment, highly ornamented with leaves and flowers, but after an entirely different pattern from those of the kings. It faces the west, and from it a door leads into a room about twenty feet square and eight feet high. On the north side are seven loculi, seven feet deep, perpendicular to the side of the room. Above these are three arched recesses, two feet and a half deep, probably for the reception of sarcophagi; and from these recesses two loculi penetrate the rock from the back part. Doors on the south and east conduct to small rooms, which have three long niches perpendicular to their three sides, the doors occupying the fourth. There is also an arched recess over the loculi in these rooms. From the north-east corner of the anteroom a flight of steps goes down into a small vestibule, neatly cut, and ornamented by recesses and a slightly

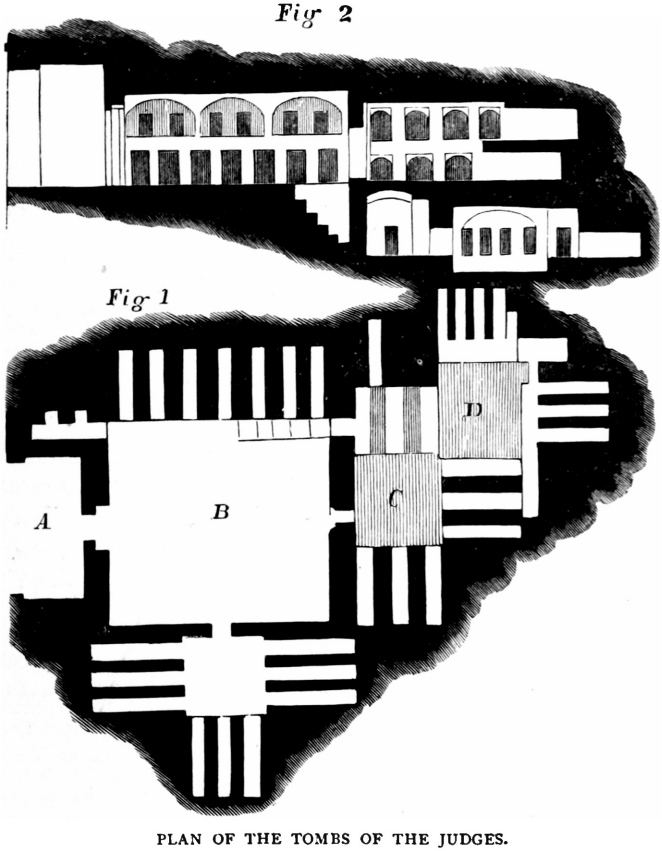
[1] Early Travels, pp. 447, 448.



TOMBS OF THE JUDGES.

arched roof like a dome. A passage leads into another chamber farther east, nine feet square and six high, each of whose three sides has also an arched recess parallel to it, from the back of which perpendicular loculi enter into the rock. In some respects this is a more remarkable catacomb than that of the kings, and the arrangement is more varied and complicated. Why the name Tomb of the Judges is given, no one can assign any plausible explanation. In all directions from this locality, but especially towards the city, the strata of the mountain have been cut and carved into perpendicular faces by ancient quarriers, and in them are innumerable tombs of every variety of pattern.

Indeed, the prodigious extent of these quarries and tombs is one of the most striking indications of a great city, and of a long succession of prosperous ages, which the environs of Jerusalem furnish.



PLAN OF THE TOMBS OF THE JUDGES.

The entrance faces the west, Fig. 1. A, vestibule. B, chamber, nearly twenty feet square, and eight high. The north side is seen in elevation in Fig. 2, and shows two tiers of niches, one over the other, not often met with in tombs. There are seven niches in the lower tier. The upper tier has three arched recesses, and each recess has two niches. From the room B doors lead out into chambers C and D, which have their own peculiar system of niches.

On the general subject of sepulchres and sacred tombs, have you ever thought of the interpretation put upon them by our Lord? In Luke we read, "Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed

killed them, and ye build their sepulchres."[1] How? why? Might not the Pharisees have replied that, by honoring their sepulchres and their memory, they condemned their murderers?

The greatest sin of Israel and of the world was and is apostasy from the true God and his worship by idolatry, and the most popular mode of this apostasy is sacrilegious reverence for dead men's bones and tombs. This is the most prevalent superstition in the great empire of China; and, in Western Asia, Jews, Moslems, Metâwileh, Druses, Nesairîyeh, Isma'îlîyeh, Kurds, Gypsies, and all sects of Christians, are addicted to it. Every village has its saints' tombs, every hill-top is crowned with the white dome of some sacred wely. Thither all resort to garnish the sepulchres, burn incense and consecrated candles, fulfil vows, make offerings, and pray. So fanatical are they in their zeal that they would tear any man to pieces who should put dishonor upon those sacred shrines. Enter that at Hebron, for example, and they would instantly sacrifice you to their fury. Now, it was for rebuking this and other kinds of idolatry that the fathers killed the prophets; and those who built their tombs would, in like manner, kill any one who condemned their idolatrous reverence for those very sepulchres. Thus the Pharisees, by the very act of building the tombs of the prophets, and honoring them as they did, showed plainly that they were actuated by the same spirit that led their fathers to kill them; and to make this matter self-evident, they very soon proceeded to crucify the Lord of the prophets because of his faithful rebukes. Nor has this spirit changed in the least during the subsequent eighteen hundred years. Now, here in Jerusalem, should the Saviour reappear, and condemn with the same severity our modern Pharisees, they would kill him upon his own reputed tomb. I say this, not with a faltering perhaps but with a painful certainty. Alas! how many thousands of God's people have been slaughtered because of their earnest and steadfast protest against pilgrimages, idolatrous worship of saints, tombs, bones, images, and pictures! And whenever I see people particularly zealous in building, repairing, or serving these shrines, I know them to be the ones who "allow the deeds of" those who killed the prophets, and who

[1] Luke xi. 47, 48.

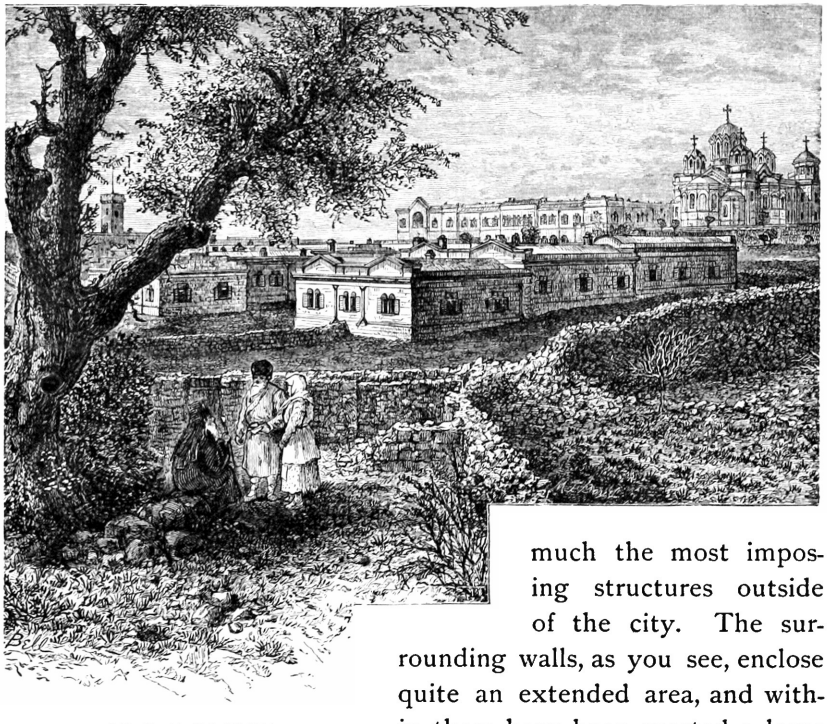
would do likewise under similar circumstances. If you doubt, and are willing to become a martyr, make the experiment to-morrow in this very city. You may blaspheme the Godhead, through all the divine persons, offices, and attributes, in safety; but insult dead men's shrines, and woe be to you!

It was, probably, that he might render apostasy into this insane idolatry impossible to a faithful Jew, that Moses made the mere touching of a grave, or even of a bone, contamination. The person thus polluted could not enter his tent, or unite in any religious services. He was unclean seven days, and was obliged to go through a tedious and expensive process of purification. And, still more, if the person would not purify himself, he was to be cut off from the congregation and destroyed. Strange that even this stern law was not sufficient to restrain the Jews from worshipping dead men's graves.

We are now entering the extensive olive-groves north of the city, and they are not destitute of interest. I have spent many days wandering amongst them, searching for the limits of ancient Jerusalem in this direction, but could not reach any definite conclusion in regard to them. There are here and there old cisterns hewn in the rock, and in some places heaps of ashes, broken pottery, and other rubbish; but these things do not prove that the city ever extended far in the direction of these groves, and my opinion is that it did not. During my residence in Jerusalem I repeatedly examined with interest a row of large stones, just visible above the surface of the ground, some four hundred yards northwards of the Damascus Gate, and imagined they might indicate the line of Agrippa's so-called third wall, or of some tower or castle belonging to it; and the same idea has occurred to others. If this be so, it is certainly remarkable that no other trace of that wall can be discovered. The Roman army, no doubt, pulled down that wall to use the materials in raising their mounds against the main ramparts of the city; but one can scarcely believe that they could have obliterated every trace of such a work if it had been carried on towards completion for any considerable distance. Here are the stones I allude to, at the feet of our horses, and I have brought you to see them and their position with reference to the doubtful

circuit of Jerusalem's third wall. Had there been other buried foundations along the line of that wall, some of them would still remain; but the most diligent search has failed to find any of the same kind.

We will now turn westwards, and ride around the extensive edifices erected by the Russians on the ridge north-west of the Jaffa Gate. They constitute a sort of New Jerusalem, and are



RUSSIAN HOSPICES.

much the most imposing structures outside of the city. The surrounding walls, as you see, enclose quite an extended area, and within them have been erected a large and beautiful church or cathedral, and three hospices — two for men, and the third for women — capable of sheltering several hundred pilgrims. The Russian consul also has his residence within this vast establishment. These hospices, as they are called, are very appropriate, and much needed; for by far the greatest number of pilgrims belong to the Russo-Greek Church, and formerly their only resort was the Greek convent within the city, where their quarters were wholly inadequate.

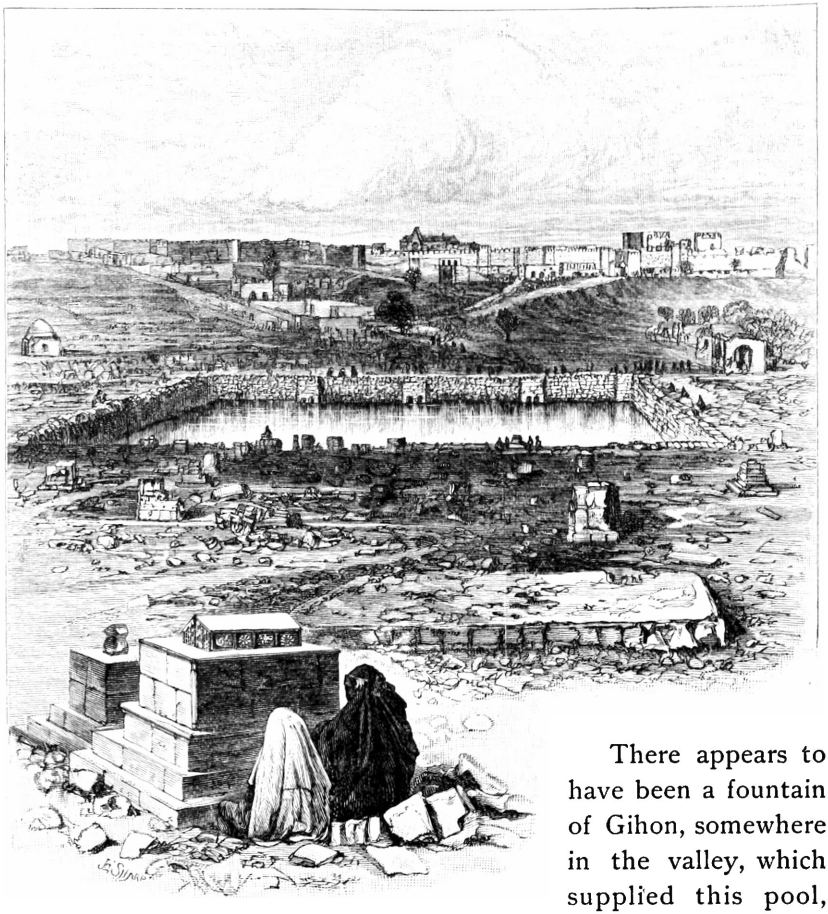
Fragments of ancient columns were discovered when digging for the foundations; and to the south of the church a gigantic shaft, cut in the solid rock, about forty feet long by five feet in diameter, can be seen still attached to the rock.

I am surprised to find such extensive suburbs, stretching all around and far to the west and south of these buildings.

The houses are all modern, and some of the private dwellings are large and handsome, being surrounded with pleasant gardens and orchards. This is a new feature in the scenery of the Holy City, and imparts a cheerful appearance to it as one approaches from the west. A few years ago there was not a house outside the gates; now houses are being built along the road to Jaffa, intended, as I am informed, for the Jews, whose numbers are steadily though not rapidly increasing.

Turning to the south, we will now ride to the upper pool of Gihon, called by the natives Birket el Mamilla. It lies in the shallow vale at the upper, or west, end of the so-called valley of Gihon, and is about one hundred and fifty rods west of the Jaffa Gate. It is partly excavated in the rock, has double walls at the sides, and buttresses on the south and west. Dr. Robinson gives three hundred and sixteen feet as the length from east to west, and the breadth, at the west end, he makes two hundred feet; at the opposite, or east, end, two hundred and eighteen feet, with an average depth of eighteen feet. I have seen it full of muddy water after a great storm, and during the winter and early spring there is always more or less water in it, which is conducted by a small canal to the pool of Hezekiah, within the city. The canal passes under the city wall, just above the Jaffa Gate. The earliest mention of Gihon is in 1 Kings i. 33, in connection with the coronation of Solomon. King David commanded Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, saying, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon." The next reference to it is in the seventh chapter of Isaiah, where the Lord said unto Isaiah, "Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, in the highway of the fuller's field."[1]

[1] Isa. vii. 3.



BIRKET EL MAMILLA—UPPER POOL OF GIHON.

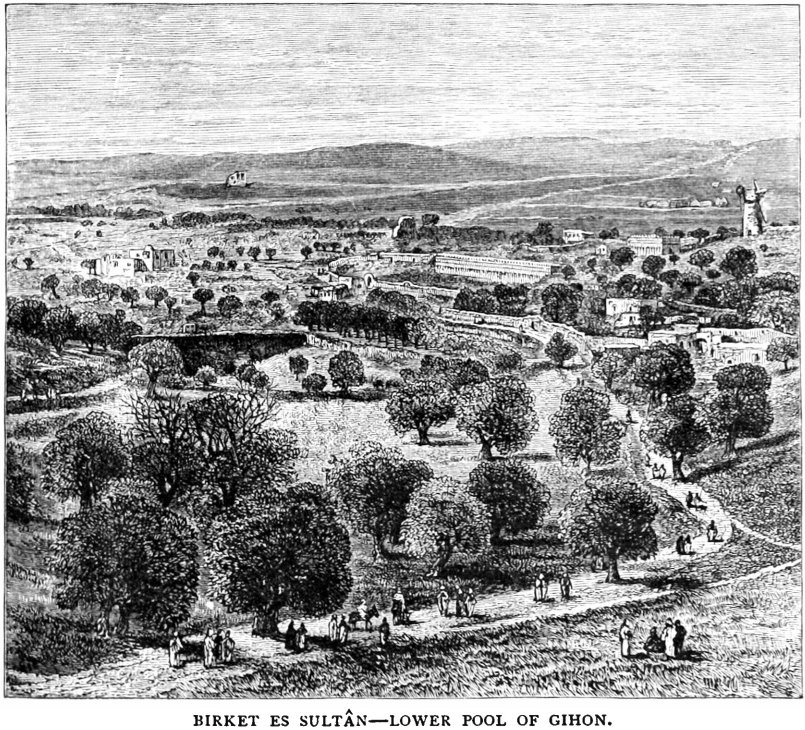
There appears to have been a fountain of Gihon, somewhere in the valley, which supplied this pool, and which Hezekiah stopped, with other fountains without the city, upon the approach of Sennacherib, as we read in the thirty-second chapter of 2 Chronicles; and it must have been at this pool that Rabshakeh uttered that insolent and blasphemous message from "the great king, the King of Assyria," to Hezekiah, King of Judah.[1]

That may be so, but there are now no indications of such a fountain, and the pool is entirely dependent upon the surface drainage of the surrounding region. It has been lately stated that at

[1] Isa. xxxvi. 1–22.

one time a high-level canal from the Pools of Solomon brought water to this pool; and this is possible, though I could never discover any traces of such a canal.

The lower pool of Gihon, called by the Arabs Birket es Sultân, is but a short distance below, in the bed of the valley, directly south of the Jaffa Gate, and is supposed to be the one mentioned in Isaiah. Dr. Robinson ventures on its identification, however. He says, "The probable identity of this tank with the lower pool of Isaiah xxii. 9 rests upon its relative position in respect to the upper pool just described, and upon the fact that no other reservoir is anywhere to be found to which this Scriptural name can so well be applied." This reasoning is satisfactory only upon the assumption that Birket el Mamilla is certainly the upper pool of Gihon.



BIRKET ES SULTÂN—LOWER POOL OF GIHON.

This Birket es Sultân is much larger than the upper pool, but in a more broken-down and dilapidated condition.

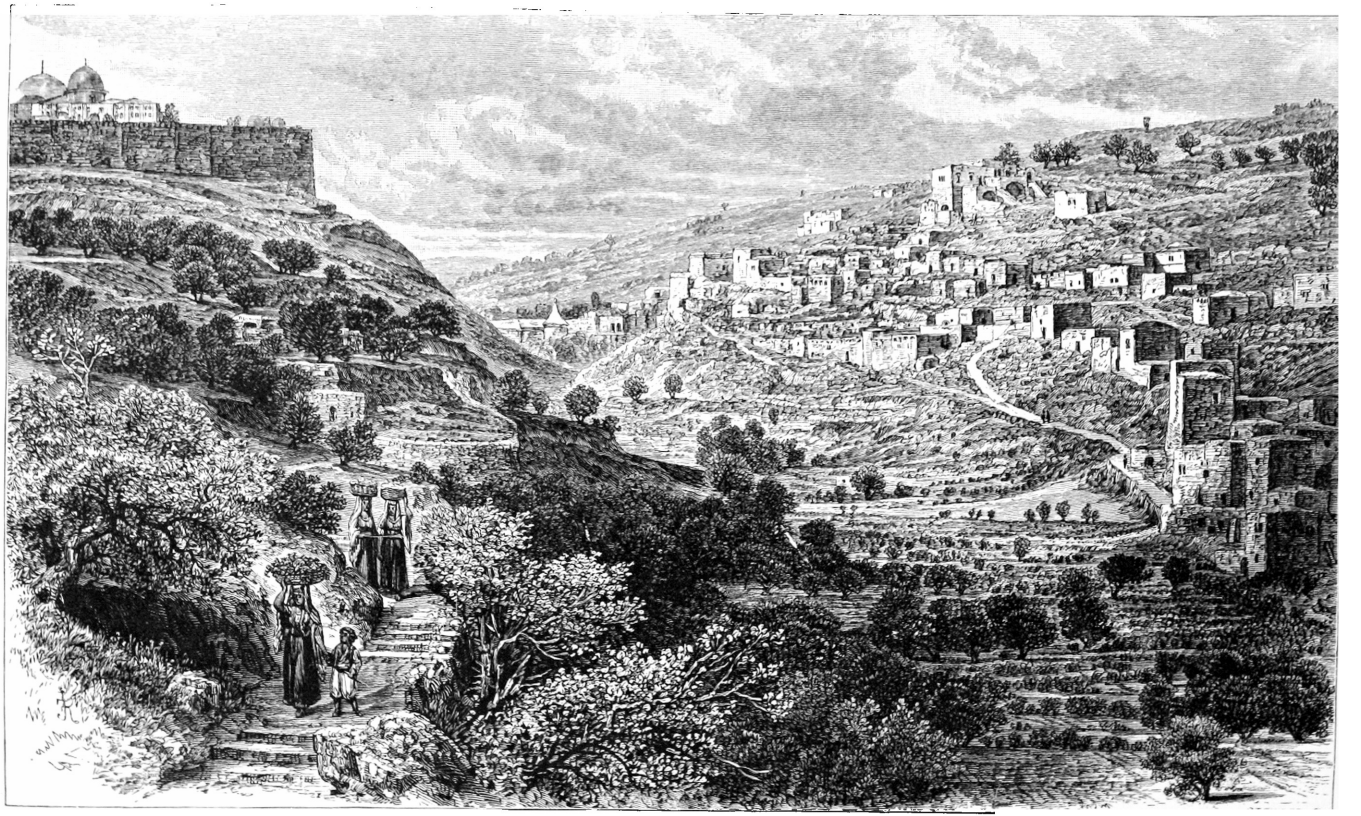
It is nearly six hundred feet long from north to south, with an average breadth of two hundred and fifty feet, and a depth of more than thirty feet at its northern end, and over forty feet at the south end. It occupies the entire width of the valley; and the bottom is the native rock, which descends rapidly southwards, so that the depth at the lower end is much greater than at the upper. Sultân Suleimân is said to have repaired it in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and from him it takes its present name. The canal from the Pools of Solomon does not enter this reservoir, but runs along the western wall, crosses the valley at its northern end, and thence turning south, it was conducted around the shoulder of Zion to the Temple area.

What was the urgent necessity for the construction of such immense open pools?

They were doubtless made after Jerusalem became the capital of the Hebrew nation and the centre of its religious worship. Their mere existence implies that there were even then no fountains or running brooks that could be relied upon to supply the wants of the multitude assembled here to keep the Passover and the other great feasts, including the numberless paschal lambs and other animals brought for sacrifice. These prodigious reservoirs, which, if in repair and filled, would far transcend the necessities of modern Jerusalem with her pilgrim crowds, corroborate the accounts of the numbers that came up here in ancient times to keep the feasts of the Lord.

This Birket es Sultân lies so low that the water from it could never have been taken into the city; and hence I suppose that it was largely used to irrigate gardens in the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, especially where the two unite above the Well of Job. In that vicinity the valley has considerable width, and there are the only gardens to be found near Jerusalem. Some suppose that place to be the site of the king's dale; and the fact mentioned in 2 Samuel xviii. 18, that Absalom reared his pillar in the king's dale, seems to lend some countenance to the idea. Josephus tells us that Absalom erected for himself a marble pillar in the king's dale, two furlongs distant from Jerusalem, which he named Absalom's Hand.[1]

[1] Ant. vii. x. 3.



LOWER VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT—SITE OF THE KING'S DALE.

There is no other dale within a quarter of a mile of the city; and therefore, I suppose, Josephus had this locality in view — whether or not correctly, is another matter. Many other places have been selected by learned writers for the site of the king's dale, but the evidence in favor of any one of them is not decisive. Apart from these doubtful speculations, there is abundant reason to believe that the valley of Hinnom, and the open space about its junction with the Kidron, were, in the olden time, covered with gardens rendered fruitful by irrigation, the water-supply being from the lower pool of Gihon, aided by the stream from Siloam.[1]

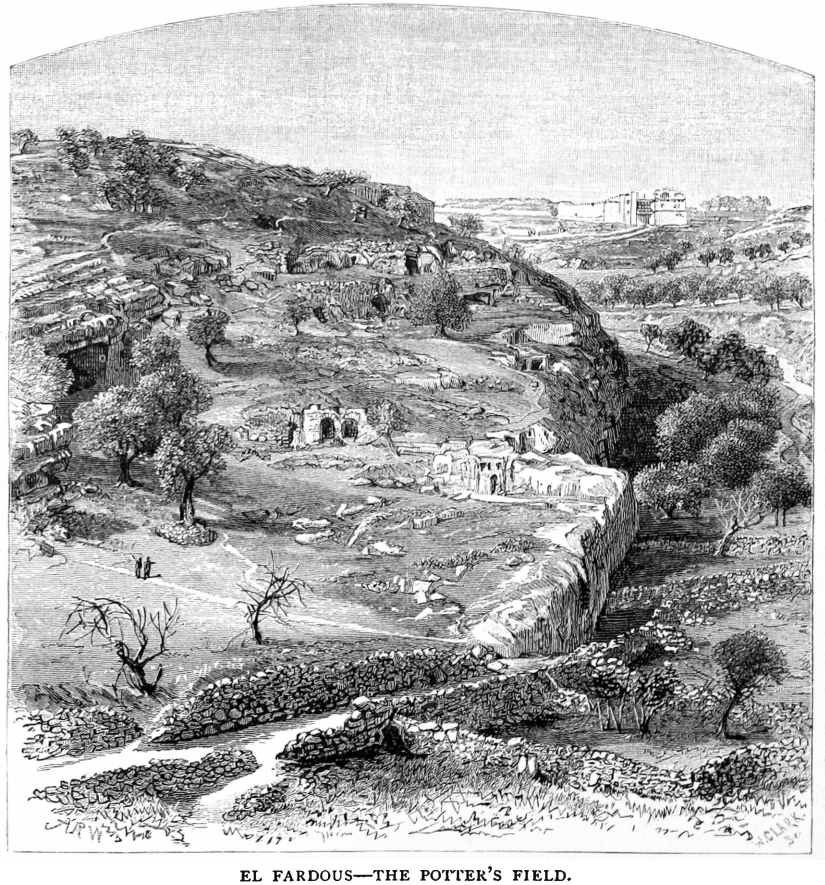
Do you suppose that the king's dale, where the King of Sodom and Melchizedek, King of Salem, met Abraham after his return from the pursuit of Chedorlaomer and the rescue of Lot, was in the vale of the Kidron.[2]

If the Salem there mentioned be identical with Jerusalem, as seems to be implied in the first two verses of the seventh chapter of Hebrews, the king's dale where the meeting took place may well be looked for somewhere there. But to change the subject to one equally doubtful, and far less pleasant: that old ruined vault is on the southern cliff of the valley of Hinnom. Our present position is encompassed with sites and scenes full of interest and deeply significant. Not to refer to the historical, prophetic, and poetic allusions to the valley of Hinnom itself, Mount Zion rises steeply on our left; and over against it, on the south, is the Hill of Evil Council, with its legend concerning "the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas," where, with his associate conspirators, "the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people," he "consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him."[3] Below it is the potter's field, "purchased with the reward of iniquity," either by Judas himself, as stated in Acts i. 18, or, more probably, by the chief priests, with the money returned to them by Judas. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, and gave them for the potter's field."[4] Dr. Robinson says, regarding it:

"Following down the side of the valley [of Hinnom], and pass-

[1] Neh. iii. 15. [2] Gen. xiv. 17–24. [3] Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. [4] Matt. xxvii. 3–10.

ing sepulchres and caverns without number, we came to the place shown as the Aceldema, or Field of Blood. The tradition which fixes it upon this spot reaches back to the age of Jerome, and it is mentioned by almost every visitor of the Holy City from that time to the present day. The field, or plot, is not now marked by



EL FARDOUS—THE POTTER'S FIELD.

any boundary to distinguish it from the rest of the hill-side; and the former charnel-house, now a ruin, is all that remains to point out the site. It is a long massive building of stone, erected in front, apparently, of a natural cave, with a roof arched the whole length, and the walls sunk deep below the ground outside, forming a deep

pit or cellar within. An opening at each end enabled us to look in; but the bottom was empty and dry, except a few bones, much decayed.

"This plot of ground, originally bought 'to bury strangers in,' seems to have been early set apart by the Latins, and even by the Crusaders themselves, as a place for the burial of pilgrims. Sir John Maundeville, in the fourteenth century, says, that 'in that Feld ben manye Tombes of Cristene Men; for there ben manye Pilgrymes graven.' He is also the first to mention the charnel-house, which then belonged to the hospital of St. John. In the beginning of the seventeenth century Quaresmius describes it as belonging to the Armenians, who sold the right of interment here at a high price. In Maundrell's day dead bodies were still deposited in it, and Korte relates that in his time it was the usual burial-place of pilgrims. Dr. Clarke repeats the same story in the beginning of this century, but at present it has the appearance of having been for a much longer time abandoned. The soil of this spot was long believed to have the power of consuming dead bodies in the space of twenty-four hours. On this account ship-loads of it are said to have been carried away in A.D. 1218, in order to cover the famous Campo Santo, in Pisa. Ten years before our visit I had listened to the same story within the walls of that remarkable cemetery."[1]

The natives call the place el Fardous—Paradise—but why or wherefore, I know not. Upon my first visit to the spot there was but one opening, and I could see only a single corpse lying at the bottom; and nobody claimed jurisdiction over the ground or the charnel-house, nor was any rent paid to the Turks for the use of either.

Turning in now to the left, we will soon reach the pool of Siloam, which lies in a recess at the south-eastern termination of Zion, near where the Tyropœon unites with the Kidron.

This is a site Biblical and historical, the identification of which is universally accepted. It is believed to be the Siloah whose waters, "that go softly"—or secretly, as by a covered way—were refused by the people, as mentioned by Isaiah.[2] In Nehemiah iii.

[1] Rob. Res. vol. i. p. 354, 355.

[2] Isa. viii. 6.

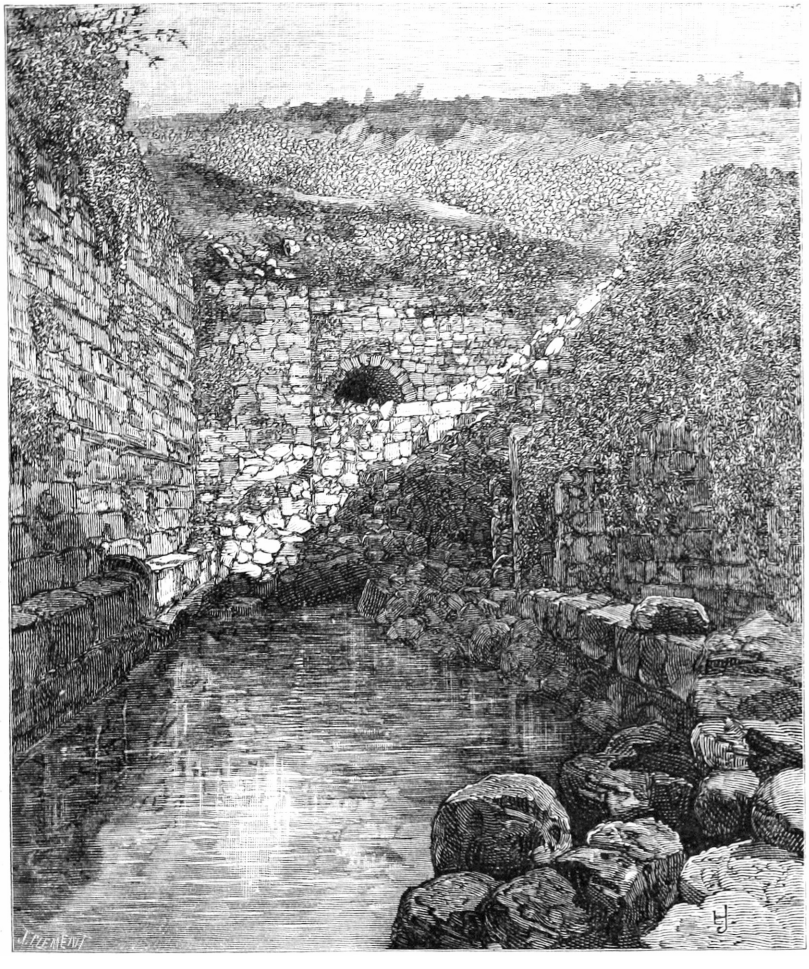
15 it is said that "Shallun built the wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden;" and, without question, it is the pool of Siloam to which the man born blind was sent by our Lord to wash, that he might receive his sight. When questioned by his neighbors, "he answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam and wash: and I went and washed, and I received my sight."[1] Siloam is often mentioned by Josephus, also by the Fathers, and by almost every traveller who has visited Jerusalem down to the current hour. Jerome was the first of the Fathers to give a correct account of the irregular flow of its waters—an occurrence not uncommon in our day, and which I have noticed, as also did Dr. Robinson, in connection with his visit to the Fountain of the Virgin. Maundrell says that the pool "was anciently dignified with a church built over it, but when we were there a tanner made no scruple to dress his hides in it."

At present the walls of the pool are so broken, and the access to the water is so encumbered with rubbish, that it must be difficult to get down to it. I am sadly disappointed with Siloam and all its surroundings.

There is nothing very picturesque about it, certainly, and the crumbling walls and fallen columns in and around it give to the pool an air of neglect, unusual even for this city of ruins and forsaken sites. It is a parallelogram, about fifty-three feet long and eighteen feet wide, and in its perfect condition must have been nearly twenty feet deep. The water comes to it from the Fountain of the Virgin, by a narrow subterraneous channel, about a quarter of a mile long, cut through the lower spur of the ridge of Ophel. I have seen this pool nearly full, though now the water merely passes through it, and when it was drawn off the stream irrigated a number of vegetable gardens in the valley of the Kidron, to the east of it.

A short distance south of the pool the spot is pointed out where tradition says that the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder, at the command of Manasseh, King of Judah. It is marked by a venerable mulberry-tree, called Isaiah's Tree, supported by a small pile of loose stones, and having a terrace surrounding the trunk.

[1] John ix. 7, 11.



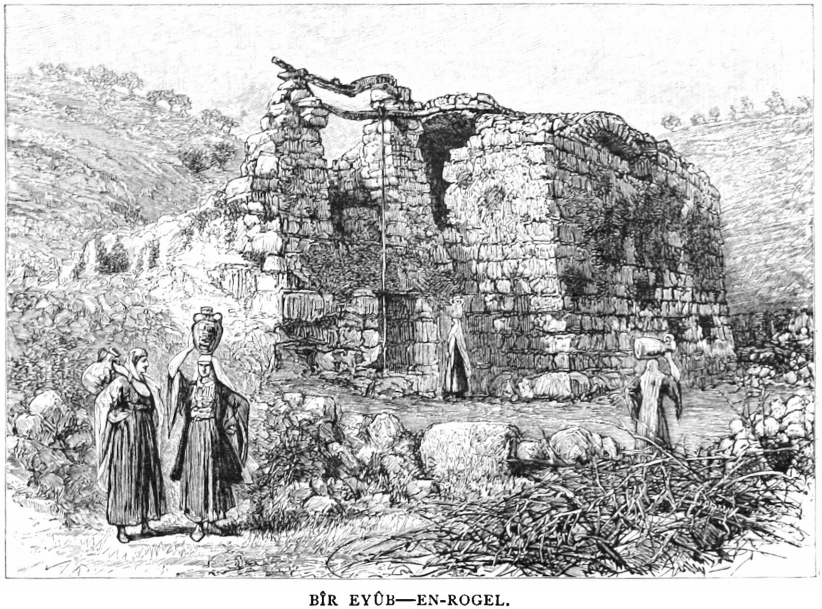
'AIN SELWÂN—POOL OF SILOAM.

Let us ride down the valley some three hundred yards to Bîr Eyûb—Well of Job, or of Nehemiah—the ancient En-rogel. It is just below the junction of the valley of Hinnom and that of Jehoshaphat, and about five hundred and fifty feet lower than the top of Zion.

Do you suppose that this well is the En-rogel mentioned by Joshua as an important point in the boundary-line between Judah and Benjamin?

It has, of course, been disputed, but I see no valid reason against the identification. In the eighteenth chapter of Joshua and sixteenth verse, where the south line of Benjamin's lot is drawn, the situation of En-rogel at the bottom of Hinnom, south of Jebusi, or Jerusalem, is clearly indicated. It was near this well that Jonathan and Ahimaaz lay hid during the rebellion of Absalom, in order to collect and send news to David, and afterwards Adonijah here conspired to seize the kingdom. "The stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel," was therefore a most suitable spot for Adonijah to slay "sheep, and oxen, and fat cattle," make a great feast, and complete his conspiracy; for the people were accustomed to assemble there on festive occasions, and multitudes might find themselves entrapped into the rebellion ere they were aware of it. In this connection it may be remarked that Gihon, down to which Solomon was immediately conducted by order of David, to be anointed king, was probably on the other side of the city. David would certainly not send him into the midst of the conspiracy. It is evident, however, from 1 Kings i. 41–43, that Gihon was so near En-rogel that Adonijah and his company could hear the rejoicing of the people that were with Solomon; and this incidentally confirms the correctness of the sites of Gihon, as now received, on the west and northwest of the city.

The celebrated Joab was with Adonijah, and by this act forfeited his life; and if the well was called Bîr Yoab instead of Eyûb, as some have maintained, we might find the origin of the name, possibly, in this last act of Joab's political career. As matters stand, we cannot discover why or on what occasion the name En-rogel was changed into Eyûb, or into Nehemiah, or into that of the Well of Fire—by all which titles it has been distinguished. The patriarch Job could have no connection with it, and that Nehemiah recovered the sacred fire from this well after his return from Babylon is a mere fable. In itself it is a singular work of ancient enterprise. The shaft, sunk through the solid rock in the bed of the Kidron, is one hundred and twenty-five feet deep. The idea of digging such a well at that precise spot may have been suggested by the fact that, after very great rains, water sometimes rises nearly to the top, and then flows out into the valley below a strong brook



BÎR EYÛB—EN-ROGEL.

capable of driving a mill. This, however, soon ceases, and the water in the well subsides to less than half its depth. From that point a stream seems to run constantly across it, and pass down the valley under the rock. The outflow of the water below may have first suggested the plan of sinking a shaft higher up and near the city wall, that there might be access to it in times of invasion. The water is pure and entirely sweet—quite different from that of Siloam—which proves that there is no connection between them. I have seen it gushing out like a mill-stream, some fifteen rods south of the well, and then the whole valley was alive with people bathing in it, and indulging in every species of hilarity. Thus it may have been in the time of David, and most likely the quantity and duration of the flow were much greater then than now.

The whole vicinity of En-rogel, and of Siloam, too, including the slopes of Zion and Ophel, are now the very last resort for any muse. Milton's famous invocation,

> If Sion's hill
> Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook, that flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
> Invoke thine aid to my adventurous song,

would never have been written if the poet had encountered the sights and scents which so disgusted us there. Milton, however, never visited this country, and withal was blind. I have seen the Kidron in ancient maps expanded into a broad river, and enlivened with boats and lateen sails. Where, therefore, the geographer fables, the poet surely may dream.

The only other site that time and strength will allow us to examine to-day is the fountain of the Virgin Mary, situated on the west of the valley of the Kidron, under the shoulder of Ophel and directly beneath, and south of the Temple area. The Arabs call it 'Ain Um ed Deraj—the Fountain of the Mother of Steps—for the sufficient reason that you have to descend to it by twenty-seven steps, each step about ten inches high, and the decline is very steep. You must by all means go down and taste the water, about which travellers greatly disagree. Josephus says it is sweet; one calls it bitter, another tasteless; Dr. Robinson pronounces it to be sweetish and slightly brackish, and he is right, according to my experience. The actual taste, however, differs considerably, according to the season and the quantity of water. When the supply is small, the peculiarities in the taste are more pronounced than during the copious rains of winter. I never liked it, either in summer or winter, always thinking that its smell was suggestive of the bath. I have little doubt but that it is mingled with the water used for Moslem ablutions and bathings in the mosks of Omar and el Aksa, directly above the fountain. Besides, I have rarely visited it without finding women from the village of Kefr Silwân standing in it, and sometimes washing clothes upon its lower steps, as they do at the pool of Siloam. Altogether, it is a deplorable place; but although the people of Kefr Silwân depend entirely upon it, the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not make much use of it.

Do you suppose that there is a connection between it and the mosks in the Temple area?

That is the common opinion. You are aware that it is a remitting fountain, being suddenly augmented at irregular intervals. I have repeatedly witnessed these fluctuations. Dr. Robinson and Dr. Smith were here about this season of the year, and as they were preparing to measure the basin of the fountain, and explore the

passage leading from it, his companion "was standing on the lower step near the water, with one foot on the step and the other on a loose stone lying in the basin. All at once he perceived the water coming into his shoe, and, supposing the stone had rolled, he withdrew his foot to the step, which, however, was also now covered with water. This instantly excited our curiosity, and we now perceived the water rapidly bubbling up from under the lower step. In less than five minutes it had risen in the basin nearly or quite a foot, and we could hear it gurgling off through the interior passage. In ten minutes more it had ceased to flow, and the water in the basin was reduced to its former level. Thrusting my staff in under the lower step, whence the water appeared to come, I found that there was a large hollow space, but a further examination could not be made without removing the steps."[1]

This irregular action of the fountain is well known to the natives, who resort to it constantly; but, as is common in all such cases of remitting and intermitting fountains throughout the country, the people ascribe the phenomenon to the agency of the jan, or demons, who are believed to occupy all such places. They say that these fountains are maskûnîn, that is, possessed or inhabited—just as "the common people," according to Dr. Robinson, "say that a great dragon lies within the fountain; when he is awake, he stops the water; when he sleeps, it flows." The doctor compares the irregular flow of this fountain with the account given in John of the pool of Bethesda, where we are told that "an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water." And as the Sheep-market, or gate, was near that pool, and apparently not far from the Temple, and the wall of the city probably ran along this valley, he raises the question whether that gate may not "have been somewhere in this part, and this fountain of the Virgin have been Bethesda? the same with the 'King's pool' of Nehemiah and the 'Solomon's pool' of Josephus." "I suggest these questions," says the doctor, "as perhaps worthy of consideration, without having myself any definite conviction either way upon the subject."[2]

In order to establish the fact that the water of this fountain of the Virgin passes under the surface by a tunnel to the pool of

[1] Rob. Res. vol. i. p. 341, 342.

[2] Rob. Res. vol. i. p. 342, 343.

Siloam, Dr. Robinson and Dr. Smith crept along the entire channel, which, owing to its many windings, they found to be seventeen hundred and fifty feet in length, although the direct distance is only about twelve hundred feet. This was a difficult achievement, and one not a little dangerous; nor has it ever been repeated, so far as I am aware, except by Captain Warren, of the Palestine Exploration Fund. He entered the rock-cut passage leading from the Virgin's fountain to the pool of Siloam from the Siloam end, where the height was sixteen feet, sloping down to four feet, and the width two feet.

"The bottom is a soft silt, with a calcareous crust at the top, strong enough to bear the human weight, except in a few places, where it lets one in with a flop. Our measurements of height were taken from the top of this crust, as it now forms the bottom of the aqueduct; the mud-silt is from fifteen inches to eighteen inches deep. We were now crawling on all-fours, and thought we were getting on very pleasantly, the water being only four inches deep, and we were not wet higher than our hips. Presently bits of cabbage-stalks came floating by, and we suddenly awoke to the fact that the waters were rising. The Virgin's Fount is used as a sort of scullery to the Silwân village, the refuse thrown there being carried off down the passage each time the water rises. The rising of the waters had not been anticipated, as they had risen only two hours previous to our entrance. At eight hundred and fifty feet the height of the channel was reduced to one foot ten inches, and here our troubles began. The water was running with great violence, one foot in height; and we, crawling full length, were up to our necks in it.

"I was particularly embarrassed: one hand necessarily wet and dirty; the other holding a pencil, compass, and field-book; the candle for the most part in my mouth. Another fifty feet brought us to a place where we had regularly to run the gauntlet of the waters. The passage being only one foot four inches high, we had just four inches breathing-space, and had some difficulty in twisting our necks round properly. When observing, my mouth was under water. At nine hundred feet we came upon two false cuttings, one on each side of the aqueduct. They go in for about two feet each. I could

not discover any appearance of their being passages: if they are, and are stopped up for any distance, it will be next to impossible to clear them out in such a place. Just here I involuntarily swallowed a portion of my lead-pencil, nearly choking for a minute or two. We were now going in a zigzag direction towards the north-west, and the height increased to four feet six inches, which gave us a little breathing-space; but at ten hundred and fifty feet we were reduced to two feet six inches, and at eleven hundred feet we were again crawling with a height of only one foot ten inches. We should probably have suffered more from the cold than we did, had not our risible faculties been excited by the sight of our fellah in front plunging and puffing through the water like a young grampus. At eleven hundred and fifty feet the passage again averaged in height two feet to two feet six inches; at fourteen hundred we heard the same sound of water dripping as described by Captain Wilson, the Rev. Dr. Barclay, and others. I carefully looked backwards and forwards, and at last found a fault in the rock, where the water was gurgling, but whether rushing in or out I could not ascertain. At fourteen hundred and fifty feet we commenced turning to the east, and the passage attained a height of six feet; at sixteen hundred and fifty-eight feet we came upon our old friend, the passage leading to the Ophel shaft, and, after a further fifty feet, to the Virgin's Fount. Our candles were just becoming exhausted, and the last three angles I could not take very exactly. There were fifty-seven stations of the compass. When we came out it was dark, and we had to stand shivering for some minutes before our clothes were brought us: we were nearly four hours in the water. I find a difference of forty-two feet between my measurements and those of Dr. Robinson; but if he took the length of the Virgin's Fount into account, we shall very nearly agree.

"The discovery of a shaft down to the water of the Virgin's Fount threw considerable light upon the object of the rock-cut canals about Jerusalem, as proving them, as had been conjectured by some, to have been for conducting away the refuse and blood from the Temple."

This account is not only interesting in itself, but it is a fair example of the manner in which Captain Warren and his asso-

ciates carried on their explorations in, under, and around Jerusalem—always with great fatigue, and often not unaccompanied by danger.

We have seen and done enough ourselves for one day, and must now return to our tents. The path keeps up the valley of the Kidron to the Garden of Gethsemane, having on the right the sepulchral monuments of Zacharias, St. James, Jehoshaphat, and Absalom; while high above, on the left, towers the eastern wall of the Haram area.

XV.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Walls of Jerusalem.—Sultân Suleimân.—Ælia Capitolina.—Zion Ploughed like a Field.—Length of the City Walls, Ancient and Modern.—Present Walls.—Large Stones in the Walls.—The Jebusite City.—City of David.—The First Wall.—The Second Wall.—Visit to the Holy Sepulchre.—Reverence due to Sacred Sites.—Sites in the Holy Sepulchre.—Stone of Unction.—The Sepulchre.—Greek Church.—Chapel of St. Helena.—Chapel of the Invention.—Golgotha.—Adam buried in Golgotha.—Procession in the Holy Sepulchre.—The Miracle of the Holy Fire.—Celebration of Easter by the Latins.—Providential Concealment of Sepulchres and Tombs.—The Reality of the Sites connected with the Crucifixion.—Site of the Holy Sepulchre.—Mr. Fergusson's Views.—The West Bank of the Kidron.—Hill above the Grotto of Jeremiah.—Golgotha, the Place of a Skull.—Traditionary Site of the Holy Sepulchre.—The Second Wall.—Tendency to Idolatry.—Via Dolorosa.—Bartlett's Description of that Street.—The Arch of the Ecce Homo.—The History of the True Cross.—The Crown of Thorns and the Nails.

April 29th. Evening.

YOU have had a long and I trust satisfactory ramble about Jerusalem to-day.

Taking advantage of the cool morning air, and starting off with Salîm, I had a most interesting walk on the top of the city walls, wherever that was possible; and where not, I passed along their base on the outside, making the entire circuit of the Holy City. I was particularly struck with the views of the interior of Jerusalem, from many places on the north wall, from which almost every house can be seen. Of course, I could not form any definite opinion about the disputed questions in regard to those ramparts, and the relation they bore to the ancient walls of Jerusalem—first, second, or third—but was contented merely to see them as they now are. The only part that appeared certainly ancient and Jewish was at the well-known south-east angle of the Haram area, and here and there along the wall between that and St. Stephen's Gate. Everywhere else the present walls seem to be built of materials and re-

mains of older walls, and a considerable part even of the eastern wall of the Haram is patchwork. Do you suppose that they indicate the course of either of the original walls?

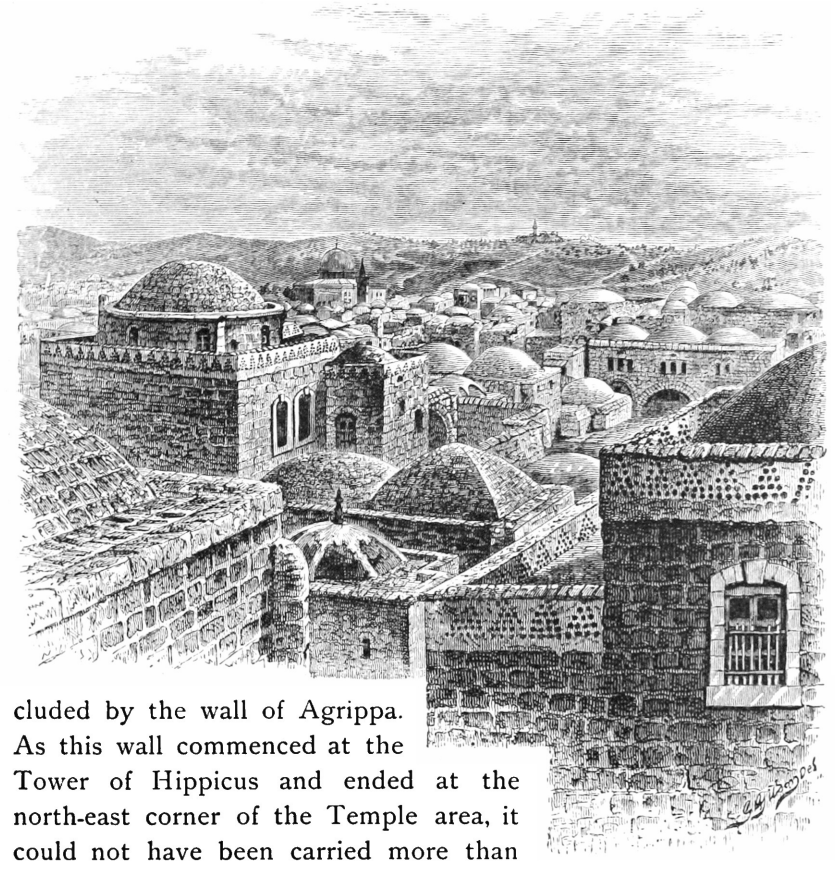
It is probable that the present western wall, from the Tower of David—Hippicus—southwards, follows the course of the first wall, since the deep valley of Gihon, below it, on the west, would render that always the necessary line for that part. The wall which crosses Zion eastwards to the Mosk of el Aksa is, of course, modern, both in its foundation and construction. The eastern wall of the Haram area is partly ancient, and I think that the part of the wall at the south end of the same area is built upon foundations as old as the time of Herod, though most of the work above ground is evidently of a later date.

The present walls of the city, according to an Arab inscription over the Jaffa Gate, were rebuilt by Sultân Suleimân in A.H. 948, A.D. 1542; but I suppose that he only repaired the then existing though dilapidated ramparts, for we know that Jerusalem always had walls, and was strongly fortified. It is probable that the Roman Ælia Capitolina occupied nearly the same site as modern Jerusalem, and the present walls may stand, for the most part, on the foundations of those which protected that city.

From occasional notices in the writings of the Fathers, it appears that, before the time of Jerome, the southern part of Zion was without the wall, and was even then "ploughed like a field," according to the prophecy of "Micah the Morasthite," who "prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest."[1]

The length of the existing walls is about two and a half miles, but the circumference of the ancient city was, according to Josephus, thirty-three furlongs, or a fraction over four miles. For the mile and a half required to complete the ancient circumference, half a mile at least must be allowed for the south part of Zion and Ophel, now without the walls. The remaining one mile will indicate the possible extent, on the north, of the area which was in-

[1] Jer. xxvi. 18; Mic. iii. 12.



INTERIOR OF JERUSALEM, FROM THE NORTH WALL.

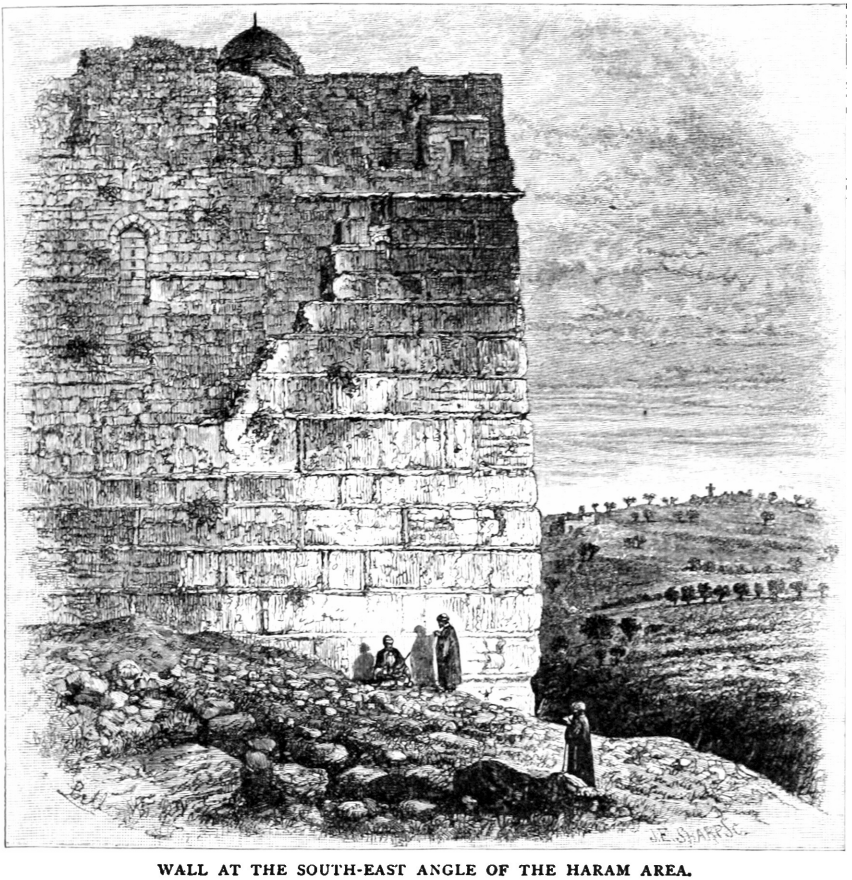
cluded by the wall of Agrippa. As this wall commenced at the Tower of Hippicus and ended at the north-east corner of the Temple area, it could not have been carried more than sixty or eighty rods farther north than the present north wall. It appears to have ascended along the line of the present wall to the north-west, to the Castle of Goliath, so called; and from thence it swept round through the present olive-grove, eastwards to the bank of the Kidron, which it followed southwards, to the Temple area, near St. Stephen's Gate. Including this part, the entire ancient city was an irregular parallelogram, a mile and a half long from north to south, with an average breadth of half a mile from west to east, which gives an area of nine hundred and sixty acres. Allowing for the one furlong more than four miles, according to Josephus, the total surface of the city in its largest extent was nearly one

thousand acres. The present walls are from ten to fifteen feet thick, and from twenty-five to forty feet high, according to the nature of the ground. They have salient angles and square towers, with battlements and loop-holes. A path, protected by a breast-work, runs all round on the top of the walls, and from many parts of it the tourist obtains his most satisfactory views of the city. The stones employed are evidently the fragments and remains of ancient structures. They vary greatly in size and appearance. Near the Damascus Gate are some fine specimens of ancient work. Along the eastern line of the Temple area, also, are portions of very ancient walls—huge stones, well cut, and laid down with the utmost regularity—probably the work of Herod. Where the south wall crosses the Tyropœon it is built of large irregular blocks, evidently the fragments of the Temple and its substructions.

Dr. Robinson gives the measurements of these stones. He says: "Here are several courses, both on the east and south sides, alternating with each other, in which the stones measure from seventeen to nineteen feet in length by three or four feet in height, while one block at the corner is seven and a half feet thick;" and he adds that, "farther to the north, where the ancient stones again appear," one of them measures "twenty-four feet in length by three feet in height and six feet in breadth." At "the Jewish place of wailing the stones are of the same dimensions;" and "at the south-west corner huge blocks become again conspicuous for some distance on each side, and of a still greater size. The corner-stone, on the west side, measures thirty feet ten inches in length by six and a half feet broad; and several others vary from twenty and a half to twenty-four feet long by five feet in thickness."[1] It was there that the doctor discovered the bridge or arch that has ever since been known as Robinson's Arch.

Before entering further upon the subject of the ancient walls of Jerusalem, it may be of use to ascertain, if we can, the exact locality of the Jebusite city which David conquered and made the capital of the Hebrew nation. To me it appears almost certain that it included the whole of what is now called Zion, both what is within the present wall and that portion without it, on the south.

[1] Rob. Res. vol. i. p. 286.



WALL AT THE SOUTH-EAST ANGLE OF THE HARAM AREA.

The broad and rounded hill of Zion afforded ample space for Jebusi, and was protected on all sides by deep valleys, with high precipitous cliffs. It was further fortified, I suppose, by walls carried along the edge of those cliffs. Beginning at the north-west corner, where stands the Tower of David—the Hippicus of Josephus—the north wall must have been carried eastwards along the cliff of the Tyropœon; then southwards above the valley of the Cheesemongers, perhaps to its junction with the Kidron, or with the valley of Hinnom; then westwards, upon the cliffs of Hinnom, to where, as the valley of Gihon, it turns northwards; and then along the ridge of Gihon to the Tower of David, from whence it

started. This was that Jerusalem which, thus surrounded by strong walls, the Jebusites deemed impregnable, and they mockingly cried unto David, "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David."[1]

If this be correct, I think it is highly probable that subsequently, when the Temple was erected upon the site of Araunah's threshing-floor, the original north wall of the city of David was prolonged and carried across the valley of the Tyropœon, and joined to the west wall of the Temple area. The city was thus made to include Mount Moriah, and the extension of it southwards, which was called Ophel. These works greatly increased the complication of the defences on the south-eastern part of the city, and, after the time of David, several of the kings of Judah added to those fortifications; and there were in that part double walls and more than one gate.

Down to the time of Josephus, and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the original first wall was still standing; and he, as an eye-witness, thus describes it: "Now, of these three walls, the old one was hard to be taken, both by reason of the valleys, and of that hill on which it was built, and which was above them. But besides that great advantage as to the place where they were situated, it was also built very strong; because David and Solomon, and the following kings, were very zealous about this work. Now, that wall began on the north, at the tower called Hippicus, and extended as far as the Xistus, a place so called, and then, joining to the council-house, ended at the west cloister of the Temple."[2] He then gives a general outline of the other parts of this old wall, by which the whole of what we now call Zion was surrounded. No one can lay down in detail its course, or follow its sinuosities, especially along that part which enclosed Ophel. But this is not of much importance, since the topographical necessities of that part of the hill of Zion mark out the general direction of the wall with sufficient distinctness.

The second and third walls both had their starting-point at the Tower of Hippicus. Looking over the district north of Hippicus,

[1] 2 Sam. v. 6–10.

[2] Jos. Wars, v. iv. 2.

which was to be enclosed by the second wall, one would expect to find it carried along the ridge above, and west of the pool of Hezekiah, to the present north wall of the city, and then eastwards past the Damascus Gate, to the top of the ridge east of it. Thence it might naturally be built along the ridge to the north-west corner of the Temple area, to which it was joined. But this line would bring the Holy Sepulchre within the city, while it is certain that the place of the crucifixion and the burial-place of the Saviour were outside of the wall. In order to exclude the Holy Sepulchre, the second wall must have made a deep bend eastwards, and descended into the upper valley of the Cheesemongers, and then followed that valley northwards to the Damascus Gate. This line appears so forced and unnatural that it must fail of acceptation. In connection with the Holy Sepulchre, we will refer to this subject hereafter.

We breakfasted, or, rather, lunched at the hotel near the Jaffa Gate, and, after resting for an hour, went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, or the Anastasis, or el Kiyâmeh—the Resurrection—as it is more appropriately called, even by the Arabs. Descending eastwards from Patriarch's street to the open court in front of the edifice, I was impressed with its antique aspect. Excellent photographs have made the world familiar with its external appearance and architectural proportions, and I shall not attempt to describe them.

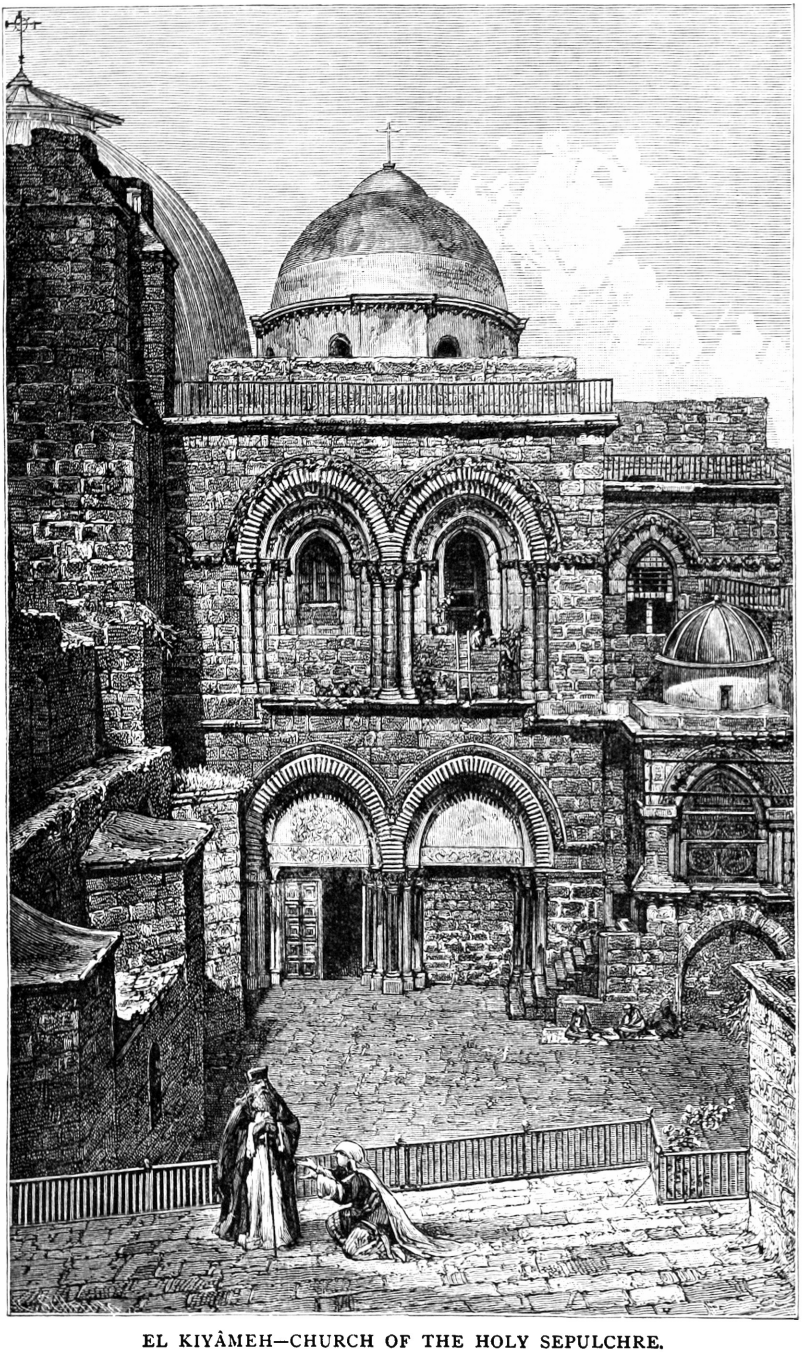
Within the building the air was delightfully cool, and the dim light was a most grateful relief from the dazzling glare without. There were but few worshippers or pilgrims, and no careless travellers from abroad to disturb the mind or distract the attention; and for a small gratuity the custodians allowed me to remain as long as I desired, and I spent several hours within that far-famed edifice.

Some of the many thoughts and impressions made upon my mind will not soon fade away. Recalling the rules and cautions you suggested for visiting such sacred localities, I felt that the whole truth had not been stated; and I wish now to resume the subject in connection with my visit to the Holy Sepulchre. Is it not possible that we Protestants carry our dislike for what is doubtful, or, at best, traditional, farther than is either necessary or profit-

able? Do not the purest and best feelings of our nature prompt us to preserve and protect from desecration such sites as that of the Holy Sepulchre? What, in fact, is it which gives such supreme gratification to our pilgrimage to Jerusalem? Is it not because we find the names of Olivet, Bethany, Gethsemane, Calvary, Zion, and the like, clinging to those sacred sites and scenes with invincible tenacity, through wars and destructions absolutely without parallel, and repeated down long centuries of most dismal darkness and confusion worse confounded? And because, in the death-struggle to hold fast these sacred landmarks, ignorant men or crafty priests have perverted them to selfish purposes, or pushed becoming reverence and love over into sinful superstition, are we therefore to scout the whole thing, and scowl upon these cherished sites, and upon those who have cherished them, as though they were guilty of "the sin of witchcraft?" I more than admit that nothing can justify idolatry; but is even a little too much reverence in such a case as odious to Him in whose honor it is manifested as cold neglect or proud contempt?

One more of my many thoughts and reflections to-day: If these sacred sites were to be preserved at all, how was this to be done? Leave the stable and the manger just as they were on the night of the advent, and so Calvary, and the garden, and the sepulchre? Certainly this would have been more satisfactory, but then it would have required a succession of the most stupendous miracles from that day to this. War, earthquake, fire, and fierce fanaticism have driven by turns their ploughshares of destruction through all these scenes, and to preserve them exactly where and as they were became impossible; and when kings and princes sought to restore them, they did it in accordance with the sentiments of their age. Hence arose over and around these sites the splendid basilica and the spacious convent.

This train of reflection has, as I said, been suggested by a visit to the Holy Sepulchre. I have come to regard that as by far the most interesting half-acre on the face of the earth. Nor is this appreciation materially affected by the doubts which hang over the questions of identity and genuineness. Around that spot, whether it be or be not the real tomb, have clustered the hopes and affec-



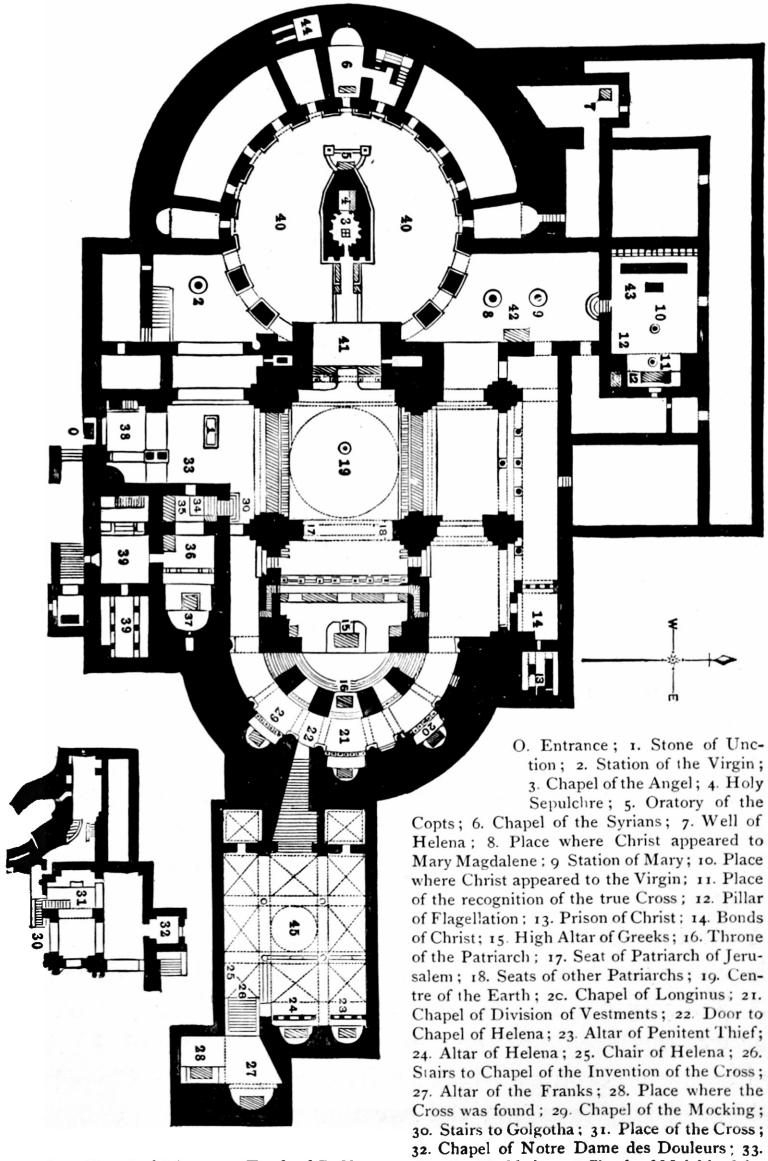
EL KIYÂMEH—CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

tions of the great Christian world for sixteen centuries at least, and with all but a few learned men it is still the accepted representative and sacred site of events of such transcendent magnitude as cast all others into the category of mere vanities. The reputed sepulchre of the Son of God is no place for soulless criticism—calm, cold, and hard as the rock itself. Whatever there may be offensive to good taste in the scenes now enacted within the Church of the Resurrection; however superstitious many of the rites and ceremonies there performed; and notwithstanding the defective, or even heretical, dogmas interwoven with those commemorative services—yet the whole combined form a link, nay, many links, in the chain of evidence upon which hangs suspended our faith and hope. During the long lapse of sixteen hundred years there have been here repeated, annually, public, organized, and most solemn commemorative services, testifying to the whole world the reality of certain facts in our holy religion absolutely essential and fundamental: that Jesus of Nazareth, the Lamb of God, suffered and died on the cross; that he was laid in a sepulchre—whether this one or another near by, matters not; and that he rose again from the dead on the third day, thus fulfilling every typical sacrifice from Abel to Zachariah which required for their consummation the shedding of his blood who was to take away the sin of the world. Without this there could be no remission. He who was to give life to the world must himself die, but not be holden of Death. He must rise triumphant over the grave; for "if Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins." Surely an edifice which commemorates and testifies to facts such as these is invested with a sacredness and a significance that no other on the face of the earth can claim.

Your imagination has been quite captivated, and yet I do not believe you have explored half the marvels of that wondrous temple. Did you not see the altar of Melchizedek, nor that on which Isaac was sacrificed, nor the Chapel of St. John, nor of the Angels, nor the marble chair on which St. Helena sat, nor the Chapel of the Division of Garments, nor the sweating pillar, nor the umbilicus of the world, nor the place where Mary Magdalene stood, nor the Chapel of Adam, nor the altar of the penitent thief, nor—

I saw none of these things, because I did not ask for them.

PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.



O. Entrance; 1. Stone of Unction; 2. Station of the Virgin; 3. Chapel of the Angel; 4. Holy Sepulchre; 5. Oratory of the Copts; 6. Chapel of the Syrians; 7. Well of Helena; 8. Place where Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene; 9 Station of Mary; 10. Place where Christ appeared to the Virgin; 11. Place of the recognition of the true Cross; 12. Pillar of Flagellation; 13. Prison of Christ; 14. Bonds of Christ; 15. High Altar of Greeks; 16. Throne of the Patriarch; 17. Seat of Patriarch of Jerusalem; 18. Seats of other Patriarchs; 19. Centre of the Earth; 20. Chapel of Longinus; 21. Chapel of Division of Vestments; 22. Door to Chapel of Helena; 23. Altar of Penitent Thief; 24. Altar of Helena; 25. Chair of Helena; 26. Stairs to Chapel of the Invention of the Cross; 27. Altar of the Franks; 28. Place where the Cross was found; 29. Chapel of the Mocking; 30. Stairs to Golgotha; 31. Place of the Cross; 32. Chapel of Notre Dame des Douleurs; 33. Door into Chapel of Adam; 34. Tomb of Godfrey; 35. Tomb of Baldwin; 36. Tomb of Melchizedek; 37. Rent in the Rock; 38. Place for Turkish Guard; 39. Robing-rooms; 40. Rotunda; 41. Entrance to Greek Church; 42. Altar of the Latins; 43. Church of the Latins; 44. Tombs of Joseph of Arimathea and of Nicodemus; 45. Chapel of St. Helena.

Possibly the "scourge" of modern scepticism has whipped them all out of the temple: no very wonderful achievement, for, as credulity brought them in, unbelief can cast them out. But you should not have undertaken to go the round of these "pilgrim stations" without some courageous champion for their integrity by your side. Here, for example, are three smart volumes of Padre Francesco Cassini, an Italian monk of the Minori Riformati. They are the latest of the kind from the press at Genoa, dedicated to Ferdinand II. of Naples, better known by the sobriquet of Bomba; a real curiosity in their way—lively, full of wit, Metastasio, and the Bible—three things remarkable in a brother of the Riformati. His countless quotations from the Bible are, however, all in good old canonical Latin, and therefore harmless to the general reader. It is refreshing to follow a gentleman and a scholar who treads fearlessly amongst all these crumbling traditions of the Dark Ages.

He would have been an admirable guide for you. Amongst other things, he would have called special attention to the Stone of Unction, which is directly in front of the entrance. It is a slab of flesh-colored marble, eight and a half feet long and four feet broad, and has at either end candelabra of great size. In the pilgrim season there is generally a crowd about this stone, bowing, praying, kissing it—though the real stone is below this marble slab—and often rubbing handkerchiefs and articles of apparel upon it, which they carry away with them, and preserve with great veneration for times of sickness or death. I have seen even American young ladies reverently rub their handkerchiefs on this slab. In former days some brought their winding-sheets, to consecrate them by contact with this slab; and others measured the stone, in order to make their shrouds of the same size. The usual custom, however, is to buy on the spot, and have measured over the slab, a shroud for each pilgrim, from delegated agents who supply the material.

On the way from this stone to the rotunda the spot where Mary and her companions stood to witness the anointing would have been shown. You then enter the rotunda between two of the eighteen square pillars that support the dome, which is sixty-five feet in diameter, with a large circular opening in the centre for the admission of light and air. Directly below this opening is the

Sepulchre itself, within a white marble structure twenty-six feet long and about eighteen feet wide. It is divided, on the inside, into two small rooms, and the entrance is from the east end by a low door, through which you pass into the anteroom, called the Chapel of the Angels. Here is shown part of the great stone which the angels rolled away from the door of the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection. Another very low door admits the visitor into the Chapel of the Sepulchre. It is only six and a half feet long by six feet wide. From the ceiling, also quite low, hang forty-three lamps of silver and gold, belonging to the different churches who claim the right to worship at this shrine. The whole interior and the Sepulchre itself are cased in marble, and the visitor can discover no indications of that "new tomb" of Joseph of Arimathea, "which he had hewn out in the rock"—the common limestone rock of Jerusalem—and "wherein never man before was laid."[1] These two rooms are open to all; but the Copts and Jacobites have small chapels near the western end of the Sepulchre. At the north-west of the rotunda is shown the Chapel of the Apparition, where Jesus is said to have appeared to his mother, and connected with this is an altar in which is preserved a fragment of the Column of Flagellation. These belong to the Latins, and above them is their chapel. They have an organ there, the echo of whose solemn symphonies through the vast rotunda it is inspiring to listen to. In that chapel the ceremony of investing those deemed worthy with the order of St. John of Jerusalem is still performed. The sword, spurs, and cross of Godfrey de Bouillon are here exhibited to all interested in such relics of Crusading times.

Directly east of the entrance to the Sepulchre is the Greek church, by far the most magnificent within the walls of that immense edifice. It is nearly one hundred and twenty feet long from east to west, and about half as wide, and is adorned with gildings and paintings; while from the vaulted roof hang numberless costly lamps and other ecclesiastical ornaments. Nearly in the middle of the paved floor, and beneath the centre of the lantern, is shown the fragment of a column said to mark the centre of the earth. It is a curious fact that this idea in regard to the umbilicus

[1] Matt. xxvii. 59, 60; Luke xxiii. 53.

of the globe dates back to the time of Tertullian, but it is generally connected with Golgotha.

Passing around the east end of the Greek church, but outside of it, you are shown the Chapel of the Parting of the Raiment, which belongs to the Armenians. Farther along the aisle are the Chapel of Division, and of the Crowning with Thorns, which call for no special notice. Near these are the stairs by which you descend, twenty-nine steps, to the Chapel of St. Helena. This is a plain room, fifty-one feet long by forty-two wide, and sixteen feet below the level of the Sepulchre. It has two altars, one dedicated to St. Helena, the other to the penitent thief. The basilica erected by Constantine was at this place, and of course there are many legends connected with it.

From the Chapel of St. Helena you descend still lower by thirteen steps, and then find yourself in a genuine cavern, twenty-four feet long, twenty wide, and sixteen feet high. This is the Chapel of the Invention of the Cross; and here were found the true cross, and those of the two thieves, the nails, the crown of thorns, and the inscription of Pilate.

A life-size bronze statue of St. Helena holding the cross will attract attention for a moment, and then the visitor gladly returns from this dark, damp, and gloomy cavern to the purer air and more cheerful light above.

To reach Golgotha, or Mount Calvary, one must, on coming up from the Chapel of Helena, pass round the choir of the Greek church southwards, and, ascending eighteen steps, he will enter the Chapel of the Cross, which is forty-two feet long and about fifteen wide. In the apse, on the east side of this room, are shown the places where stood the three crosses, that of Jesus in the middle, and on either side those of the two thieves, some five feet distant. About the same distance from the cross of Christ is shown the cleft in the rock when "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent," at the hour that "Jesus yielded up the ghost;" and beneath it is the Chapel of Adam.[1]

The idea that Adam was buried on Golgotha prevailed extensively in early times. It is mentioned by Origen, Athanasius, Basil,

[1] Matt. xxvii. 50, 51.

Jerome, and many others. One feels reluctant even to repeat the tradition that the blood of Jesus flowed down through the cleft in the rock upon the head of Adam, and by it he was restored to life.

This singular tradition could well be spiritualized. Adam, the federative head and representative of his fallen race, and the blood of Jesus flowing upon him and raising him to a new life, may symbolize the divine efficacy of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, by which eternal life has been purchased for the world. With this thought I am willing to bid farewell to the Holy Sepulchre and all its marvellous legends and traditions.

I needed no Padre Francesco Cassini for cicerone. My own thoughts were my best companions. There were few people present, and but little noise, and the impression produced was solemn and sad. Though none of the things there had any connection with the death and burial of Jesus, yet they have long represented the various scenes of that mysterious and awful Passion of our Saviour, and I gave myself up to reverent and devout meditation.

My introduction to that church was totally different, and my first impressions were most unhappy. On the 6th of April, 1833, I arrived from Ramleh much fatigued, but, as an important ceremony was going forward in the church, I hastened thither at once. The whole edifice was crowded with pilgrims from all parts of the world, and it was with difficulty that I followed my companion into the rotunda. There a priest who knew us came up, and, after inquiring about the news of the day, asked if we would be conducted into the interior of the Greek chapel, where the religious services were going on, and then summoning a Turkish cawäss, we began to move in that direction. To my amazement and alarm, the cawäss began to beat the crowd over the head, when down they crouched to the floor, and we walked over their prostrate bodies. There was no help for it; those behind, rising up, thrust us forwards. After proceeding some distance, we paused to take breath where the crowd was more dense and obstinate than usual, and I was seriously informed that there was the exact centre of the earth, and those obstinate pilgrims were bowing and kissing it. Finally we reached the altar at the east end without any serious injury to the living causeway which we had traversed, and I had time to look about

me. The scene throughout had all the interest of entire novelty. I was young, and just from America, and was seized with an almost irrepressible propensity to laugh. The noise was deafening, and there was not the slightest approximation to devotion visible, or even possible, so far as I could judge; while the attitudes, costumes, gestures, and sounds which met the eye and stunned the ear were infinitely strange and ludicrous. Such splendor, too, I had never seen. By the aid of numerous lamps, the whole church seemed to flash and blaze in burning gold. I stood near the altar, which was covered with cloth of gold, and decorated with censers, golden candlesticks, and splendid crucifixes.

A bench of bishops and priests filled the entire space within the railing, and monks were waving, or, more accurately, swinging censers before them. The "cloud of incense" rose circling to the upper dome, diffusing on all sides a strong aromatic odor. After some delay, the whole priesthood of those denominations which then united in this ceremony were assembled, and, with lighted candle in either hand, stood ready for the grand fête of the day. In single file, priests and bishops, in long robes of gold and silver texture, passed out into the body of the church with solemn pomp. Turkish officers went before, beating the heads of the crowd, who bowed down as they had done for us. Slowly the gorgeous procession worked its way along the north side, singing, with nasal twang and stentorian lungs, harsh harmony in barbarous Greek. In a short time they returned, laid aside their robes, extinguished their tapers, and the multitude dispersed, greatly enlightened by—a vast number of wax-candles, and edified by a devout manifestation of splendid canonicals. Our friend, in his robes, and with candles lighted, inquired, in the careless tones of ordinary conversation, concerning our journey, the roads, Ibrahim Pasha, and the war that was then going on with the Sultan; while the people in the body of the church were laughing, talking, praying, shouting, or quarrelling. Such was my introduction to the Holy Sepulchre, and I have not been able to banish from my mind the first unhappy impressions, nor can I visit the church now with either pleasure or profit.

I shall never forget that occasion, for we were compelled to bear a certain part in the ceremonies. Franks were rare in Jerusalem

at that distant date, my travelling companion and myself being the only two then in the city. The friend who introduced us into the clerical circle behind the altar was a learned priest of the Greek convent, who, though knowing us to be missionaries, when the procession commenced to move round the Sepulchre, thrust lighted tapers into our hands, and we were obliged to proceed with the rest. In our travel-soiled clothes we made a sorry appearance amongst the gorgeously arrayed dignitaries who preceded us; and as soon as possible we blew out the tapers and made our escape.

The following Saturday I went to the Church of the Sepulchre, to witness the ceremonies of the Holy Fire.

I have never seen a satisfactory description of this celebrated ceremony, and should like to know more about it.

Dean Stanley gives an admirable account of it, but he says that, "considering the place, the time, and the intention of the professed miracle," it is "probably the most offensive imposture to be found in the world."[1] The dean witnessed the ceremony of the Holy Fire in 1853. I will describe it as I saw it, just twenty years before his visit. The ceremonies vary somewhat on different occasions, but are always substantially the same.

Knowing that this was the grand event of Easter-week, and that the desire to participate in it had drawn multitudes to the church, I expected a great crowd of pilgrims, and therefore went early; but the edifice was already densely packed. Not only were the rotunda and adjoining chapels below filled with eager and expectant crowds, but so, also, was every niche and corner, gallery, balcony, window, and possible standing-place, rising rank above rank along the walls of the rotunda. The Chapel of the Sepulchre loomed up from amidst the mass of pilgrims who stood or sat about; and around them a lane was formed by the soldiers stationed to keep back the crowds pressing from behind, and to preserve order. Upon entering, I was startled by the ringing zulagît of the women, echoing through the grand dome in a manner most surprising. I had never heard it before. It is a shrill âh-wê-hâ, long-sustained, quivering and trilling into an endless lă-lă-lă-lă-lee, once heard never forgotten, and which every Arab woman can execute with more or less

[1] Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, p. 460–468.

proficiency. I have heard it thousands of times since that day, at weddings and on festive occasions, but never by such a multitude of excited and jubilant performers.

We had secured places on an elevated platform at the northern side of the rotunda, and directly in front of the aperture through which the Holy Fire was to make its appearance, and from there had the entire boisterous scene below us in full view. It seemed to be the belief that, unless some one ran round the Sepulchre a certain number of times, the fire would not issue from the hole. Accordingly, individual pilgrims would run round, breaking through the lines, until stopped by the soldiers. Frequently one man, fastening upon the shoulders of another, like the Old Man in the story of Sinbad the Sailor, would compel him to run round the circle, until, jumping off, he would be succeeded by another. Occasionally four stout men, standing face to face, would form a hollow square. Upon their shoulders four others were hoisted, and this living column would start off round the Sepulchre at a perilous rate—those above swinging their Greek cap or Arab tarboush, as the case might be—singing, shouting, clapping their hands, waving handkerchiefs, and twisting their bodies into the most absurd contortions. These exhibitions would wake up the echoes of the zulagît to deafening screams. At times the whole circle between the troops would join in procession, and a man would be carried round feigning death, borne upon men's shoulders, the people following, cursing the Jews and praising themselves. Coming round again, they would appear leaping, stamping, shouting in frantic triumph, "This is the tomb of our Lord; we to-day are joyful, and the Jews are sad. Light is poured out from heaven, and we keep the feast on earth." The multitude swaying hither and thither, pushing and thrusting in all directions, and not seldom whole groups moving in opposite directions, would come into collision, and tumble pell-mell upon the pavement, like a row of ninepins.

I witnessed this strange scene for four hours, the crowd increasing constantly from about noon until the fire appeared. The crush around the aperture whence the light was to issue was tremendous, as by this time there were thousands of pilgrims within the building besides the spectators. Some Greek sailors, from a man-of-war

anchored at Jaffa, had stationed themselves at the aperture, and others, particularly the men of Bethlehem, endeavored to force them away. They yelled, and swore, and fought, and had not the soldiers frequently rushed in and forcibly separated the combatants, serious mischief would have occurred.

At half-past twelve a bell rang, and I was informed that the governor of the city had arrived. He is responsible, and must always be present on these occasions to preserve order. Soldiers paraded round the Sepulchre continually, and often had to use their merciless whips.

About one o'clock the grand clerical procession commenced to move round the Sepulchre with large banners, having painted on them representations of the various scenes in the Passion of the Saviour. Soldiers marched before, and, beating the people on the head, cleared the way. Following the banners came the priests and bishops, resplendent in their canonicals of purple and gold, some swinging censers, others chanting the appointed anthems. An aged bishop, surrounded by a picked band, closed the procession. Having with much difficulty encircled the tomb three times, the bishop entered the Sepulchre alone. Then there was for a few moments a profound and expectant silence. At length a light shone in the aperture, a bundle of prepared tapers was thrust in, and quickly withdrawn all ablaze. Instantly the whole vast edifice rang with exultant shouts. The scrambling and fighting for the light that succeeded beggars all description. The people were frantic—leaping, dancing, shouting, and swinging their burning tapers in the air. A swift horseman was despatched to carry the sacred fire to the Greek church at Bethlehem. Gradually the Holy Fire spread from hand to hand, till at last the entire rotunda, from pavement to gallery, balcony and window, blazed with thousands of lighted tapers. When the light reached us, a person sitting next to me, passing his flaming tapers under his chin and over his face, declared that it was pure light from heaven, and would not burn. I thrust a bit of paper into them, and it ignited immediately. "Don't look at that," he exclaimed—"don't look at that; it burns because you have no faith:" and again he passed them over his face and under his chin, but this time so leisurely that his beard was decidedly singed; and

yet such is the strength of this strange delusion, that even this man asserted most vehemently that it was divine light, and not ordinary fire.

I was amazed to witness the reverence with which this Holy Fire is regarded. Not only do the people pass it over their faces many times, open their clothes—both men and women—and thrust the lighted tapers into their bosoms, but they gather the smoke in their hands, and rub themselves as if with a precious perfume. They fumigate extra garments, brought for the purpose, and finally carry the offensive ends of the candles to their distant homes, for the relief of the sick and the consolation of the dying.

My companion asked a priest who sat near him what all the noise and confusion we had just witnessed meant. "Joy, joy," he replied. "But what kind of joy?" "Joy in the Lord," said he, laughing, in evident confusion at the absurdity of the thing.

There was not the least appearance of religious reverence during the entire ceremonies, and to me the spectacle was extremely humiliating; and when I remembered that this was the most imposing exhibition of the Greek religion which the Muhammedan or the Turk ever see—though some of their ceremonies are equally offensive—I could no longer be surprised that they despise the name and faith of such Christians, and call them dogs and idolaters.

I was here the next year, when several hundred pilgrims were crushed to death in their frantic efforts to burst open the door and escape from the suffocating fumes within, caused by the sudden kindling of an unusual multitude of tapers. The celebrated Ibrahim Pasha, of Egypt, with his staff, was present on that occasion, and was with much difficulty rescued by his guard. But I need not describe that awful scene. We have, perhaps, dwelt too long upon this subject—in no way an agreeable one—but it is well, I suppose, to know what dreadful results ignorant fanaticism and designing priestcraft may bring about in this world. Forewarned is forearmed; and we must not forget that these scenes are enacted in open day every year in Jerusalem, the city of the Great King, in this last half of the nineteenth century, and sanctioned by some of the largest branches of the nominal Christian Church.

What is the history of this extraordinary miracle of the Holy Fire? When, and by whom, was it instituted?

No one seems to know. It is not, however, a modern institution. Probably it grew up gradually, and has passed through different phases. For many centuries all sects, including the Roman Catholic, united in those ceremonies; but it was finally wrested by the Greeks from the Latins, and now the latter denounce and deride it. "Ah! vedete la fantasia! Ecco gli bruti Greci—noi non facciamo cosi!" exclaim the Franciscans in the Latin gallery, but, alas! with very little reason. Their own manner of celebrating Easter in this very Church of the Anastasis is equally offensive.

Have you ever attended those ceremonies?

Yes; more than once. The last time I went to accompany a French Catholic lady, who had come to Jerusalem mainly to witness the Easter services of her Church. I must condense, for this subject is becoming wearisome. Many of the Catholic rites are here performed in the night, and on this occasion the monks were to enact a dramatic representation of the Passion—the death, burial, and resurrection of the Saviour. The services had already commenced when we arrived, and the part then performing in the Chapel of the Cross was the nailing of an image of Christ, large as life, to a cross. During the time occupied in the nailing a sermon was delivered by a monk in Spanish. The cross was then raised up in its place, the incidents of the crucifixion were enacted, and another sermon—this time in Italian—was preached to the audience. The cross was then very carefully taken down, the silver nails drawn out, ostentatiously exhibited to the spectators, and deposited upon a silver tray, while still another discourse was pronounced in French. The image was now carried below to the Slab of Unction, and, during the preparation for the burial, a sermon in Arabic was preached. After this the image was carried in funeral procession to the Sepulchre, under the dome of the rotunda, and there a sermon was pronounced in Portuguese.

We did not remain for the resurrection. The lady whom I accompanied became strangely affected at this stage in the proceedings, and began to weep, begging to be taken to her hotel. "Take me away!" she cried; "take me away! God will not tolerate such

awful wickedness, but will surely sink the church and all that are in it into the abyss, and it will be of no avail to say that we were here merely as spectators." This was a finale of our visit wholly unexpected, but I was quite willing to retire from the scene. It was nearly morning before the whole tragedy was completed.

Here, again, the spectacle was sad and humiliating on account of the presence of the insolent Moslem soldiers—this time not so much to keep the people in order as to protect the Latins from assault. Along three sides of the Chapel of the Cross were posted, in the inside, a body of regular troops, with fixed bayonets; and, wherever the procession moved, these Turkish soldiers accompanied it to clear the way, and defend the Latins from the more numerous and more fanatical Greeks. Nor was this precaution unnecessary. Riots then frequently occurred between the belligerent monks, in which the Greeks were generally victorious, and the Latins obliged to flee and abandon their processions. These scandalous conflicts created no small noise in those days, and sometimes threatened to cause serious complications between the different governments of Europe.

I no longer wonder at your disinclination to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but I have no such scenes associated with it.

I am free to confess that it is not possible for me to regard the Holy Sepulchre and its amazing congregation of sacred sites with any complacency. The Latin tragedy is as offensive as the Greek comedy, and I am devoutly thankful that no amount of learning or research can establish the remotest connection between any act of our Saviour and these so-called holy places. And I seem to find, in this uncertainty which hangs over every sacred locality, the indication of a watchful Providence, in beautiful accordance with many similar interpositions to save God's people from idolatry. The grave of Melchizedek, the typical priest; of Joseph, the rejected of his brethren and sold; of Moses, the law-giver and deliverer; of Joshua, the captain and leader into the Land of Promise; of David, the shepherd and king; of John the Baptist and forerunner; and of Mary, the mother whom all nations shall call blessed—the tombs of all these have been irrecoverably lost, and the same watchful care has hid forever the instruments of the Saviour's Passion, the exact spot where he was crucified, buried, whence he rose again to life,

and also the place from which he ascended into heaven. I would have it thus. And certainly, since God has concealed the realities, we have no need of these fictitious sites to confirm our faith. We are surrounded by witnesses, in these mountains, and valleys, and ruins, that cannot be effaced or corrupted. They are now spread out before our eyes. There was the Temple—type of the Saviour. Beyond it was Zion—symbol of the Church of God. Here lies the whole scene of our Lord's last actions, teaching, and Passion. There he instituted the Supper. Below us is the garden of agony and betrayal. The house of Pilate was on that hill above it, where he was examined, was scourged, buffeted, robed in mock purple, and crowned with thorns. Along that rocky way he bore his cross; there he was nailed to it, was lifted up, was reviled, was given gall and vinegar to drink, and when all was finished he bowed his head and died. Then the sun refused to shine, and darkness fell on all the land; the earth quaked, the rocks rent, and the graves were opened. There was the new tomb in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. Thither the angels came down and rolled the stone from the door, while the Lord of life burst the bars of death, and rose triumphant o'er the grave. All those things

> Which kings and prophets waited for,
> But died without the sight,

did actually take place here. Our eyes gaze up to the same heaven which opened to receive him ascending to his Father's right hand. The great atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God was offered up there on the unquestioned area of the Holy City. This is all I care for—all that mere topography can offer. If sure, to the fraction of a foot, in regard to the Sepulchre, I could no more worship it than I could worship the boat in which he sailed over Gennesaret, or the ass upon which he rode into Jerusalem, and hence I have no need of any of those "inventions;" and since they are perverted to an idolatry worse than the burning of incense to the brazen serpent, I would have them all removed out of sight, that he who is a spirit may be worshipped, even at Jerusalem, in spirit and in truth.

If you reject the Holy Sepulchre as the site of the crucifixion, where would you locate it?

I do not venture to select any definite locality. Mr. Fergusson, in his "Ancient Topography of Jerusalem," believes that he has proved incontestably that the scene of the crucifixion was somewhere within the Haram area, and that the Mosk of Omar is the basilica which Constantine erected over what was believed to be the Sepulchre of the Saviour. I do not choose to believe any of his special theories, but must leave others to criticise them who may be so disposed.

It has been maintained by some that the crucifixion took place on the west bank of the Kidron, somewhere north of St. Stephen's Gate. The arguments in favor of it are sufficiently plausible to entitle this theory to careful consideration. That vicinity is suitable in itself; it was certainly outside of the city, for the wall of Agrippa was not erected until some twelve years after the crucifixion. It was near the city, and especially to that quarter of it occupied by the Romans; and it would be natural that the soldiers should resort to the most convenient place for the execution of their commission, and this would be at some vacant spot on the west bank of the Kidron. According to this theory, the sacrifice of the Son of God was offered up on some part of Mount Moriah, though not within the Temple area, where so many typical sacrifices had foreshadowed that of the divine Antitype. This has long been a cherished idea, or, rather, sentiment, which strongly predisposes me to accept it, but with no desire, however, to select any particular spot for the actual scene of the crucifixion.

Recently, the knoll, or rounded hillock, above the Grotto of Jeremiah, north of the Damascus Gate, has been fixed upon by some as the site of the crucifixion. The idea appears to have been suggested by the resemblance, real or imaginary, between the shape of that hillock and that of a human skull, and from which resemblance it is supposed the name Golgotha—the place of a skull—was given to the original spot. But there is no tradition even that the hillock was ever called Golgotha; and, further, there is no evidence that the place of the crucifixion received that name because of its resemblance in shape to a skull, although this also has been maintained. Some incident of a totally different character may have suggested the name.

It should be candidly admitted, I think, that the Holy Sepulchre is the only site supported by ancient tradition; and yet I am persuaded that it is not the true one. I cannot believe that the spot upon which the present church stands was originally without the wall of the city. No practical engineer would select a line for the second wall which, starting from the Hippicus and ending at the north-west corner of the Temple area, should leave the site of the Holy Sepulchre west or north-west of it. To effect that, the line must have descended at once from the Hippicus eastwards towards the Holy Sepulchre, so as to pass below the pool of Hezekiah, and thence across the corner of the Mûristân—the Hospital of St. John—where there is an accumulation of rubbish for sixty or seventy feet before the rock is reached. Or, keeping above the pool to the northern end of it, the wall must have there made a right angle, descending steeply eastwards to the corner of the Mûristân, as already mentioned. Having by this extraordinary course got the wall down into the deep valley, for no apparent reason except to place the site of the Holy Sepulchre outside of it, how was the engineer to carry it thence to the north corner of the Temple area? Along what possible line could it be built that would not make the entire work ridiculous? It would give to that part of the city a configuration quite preposterous, and so contract the area included between it and the old first wall as to make it scarcely worth while to erect it at all.

It is highly probable, from the topographical conditions and necessities, that the second wall was carried northwards from the Hippicus to a considerable distance above and west of the pool of Hezekiah, until it reached the line of the present north wall of the city, which it followed eastwards past the Damascus Gate to some point on the ridge beneath which is the Cotton Grotto, thence along that ridge southwards to the Temple area. A wall on this line could be easily erected, would be strategically defensible, and would give to that part of the city a large and well-defined area. Of course, it would include the site of the Holy Sepulchre, just as it is now, within the wall. This is fatal to the claims of the present church, and, as long as the physical topography of Jerusalem remains what it now is, will continue to suggest grave doubts in

regard to the identity of all these sacred localities. Many will greatly regret this; but I do not, and for the very reasons by which Mr. Fergusson justifies his elaborate and earnest effort to prove that the Mosk of Omar covers the site of the Sepulchre.

He says: "Whether, however, I am right or wrong in what I am going to advance, I agree with Dr. Clarke and many others in thinking that the idea that the present church contains the Sepulchre of Christ is too absurd to merit serious refutation; and I do not believe it would be required but for a hiatus in the arguments of all those who have opposed it—in their not being able to say, or even hint, where the true Sepulchre was, and where the various scenes of the Passion were enacted; and till this is done, I fear it is not in human nature to admit any argument, however reasonable; for there is, and always has been, in the human mind, or, at all events, in a certain class of human minds, a principle of idolatry which has given form to the faith of millions of millions, through thousands of years, and which requires that, for the calling forth or exercise of their faith, some tangible object should be presented to their corporeal senses—whether in the form of a relic, of a holy spot with which an act may be associated, or a graven image which will represent what the mind is too lazy to conceive, and which requires, in this instance, a sepulchre; and it matters little whether it be the true one or not—it answers their purpose. To me this appears to be the real flaw in the argument; and, unless it is supplied, men will twist and torment facts and evidence till they make it quite clear to their own minds that what they wish to be true must be so."[1]

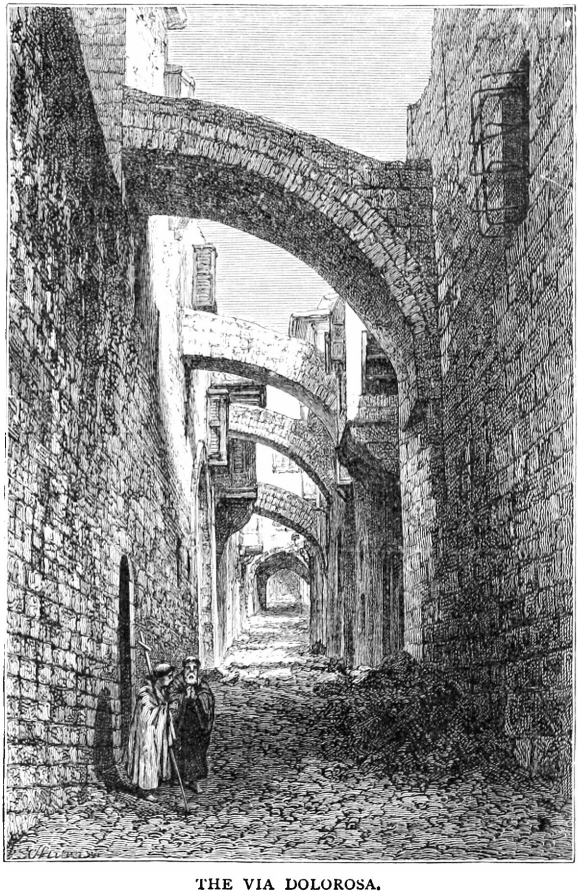
While the facts mentioned by Mr. Fergusson cannot be denied, I do not admit the conclusions based upon them. In this case there is no necessity to search for a site which the providence of God has rendered it impossible to discover, and no excuse for inventing one to satisfy the perverted bias of some human minds to idolatry. Far better rest contented with the undoubted fact that somewhere, without the walls of this very limited platform of the Holy City, the Son of Man was lifted up, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."[2] It is himself

[1] Fer. An. Top. of Jer. p. 76, 77.

[2] John iii. 14, 15.

that men must believe in, not his Sepulchre. It is not on Golgotha we must look for salvation, but to the precious blood of the Lamb of God there shed, that taketh away the sins of the world.

After leaving the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and examining some curious old buildings a little to the south-west of the court, I returned by the Via Dolorosa, stopping for a moment at each of the "stations" along its course. That whole street, with all its sacred places, I give up at once, as no plausible evidence can be adduced for the identity of any of the stations.



THE VIA DOLOROSA.

Padre F. Cassini would have stoutly contended for the integrity of every one of the fourteen. According to him, however, this street is intolerably long. He says that the Via Dolorosa for the human race began in Eden, when Adam was condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, and all men travelling along it from that day to this have had their "stations" of sorrow and of suffering!

Mr. Bartlett, the author and artist, thus describes the Via Dolorosa, which he pronounces to be "the most gloomily impressive street of any within the precincts of this melancholy city:"



THE VIA DOLOROSA.—ARCH OF THE ECCE HOMO.

"The pavement is rugged and slippery as a mountain road; the prison-like walls on either side are only pierced here and there by a small door-way or grated window, or a wooden 'jalousie.' In the shade of the archways the passenger stumbles over heaps of stone and rubbish, or is half blinded with clouds of dust, while vapors indescribably fetid escape from holes and corners, and assail his nostrils. As may be supposed, at twilight these archways are involved in utter darkness; and, unless provided with a lantern, it is difficult to grope one's way without treading upon a sleeping dog, or coming into violent collision with some invisible passenger."[1]

Some improvement in the street has been made since then, but still the Via Dolorosa is gloomy and narrow—descending rapidly in some places, entirely arched over here and there, sometimes open to the sky, or divided by a succession of flying buttresses.

Before arriving at the Pasha's palace, or the Sarâya, at the north-west corner of the Haram area, this street passes under a lofty arch, now known as the Ecce Homo. The arch is evidently modern, though the pier on either side has all the appearance of antiquity. Here it is that monkish tradition points out the place where Pilate stood when he said to the Jews, "Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him."[2]

There is not a yard of the walls on either side of this street that existed at the time of the crucifixion; still, the arch is a striking object. It is high, quite round, spanning the entire width of the street, and having an ordinary room on the top of it, much dilapidated. It will always attract the attention of the pilgrim and the traveller; and the opinion, probably correct, "that the judgment hall," or "Pilate's house," was situate in the immediate vicinity, gives a degree of verisimilitude to the tradition of the Ecce Homo that makes many a believer pass beneath this impressive arch with silent reverence.

[1] Bart. Jer. Revis. p. 109.

[2] John xix. 4–6.

I feel a singular curiosity to learn something about the subsequent history of the true cross, and what became of it, and where it is at present.

The tale is too contradictory and unsatisfactory to merit any but a very rapid notice. Passing by the silence of Eusebius, who resided in Palestine at the time, as to the part which Helena is said to have taken in the discovery of the "invention," and taking up the story as reported in the next generation and ever afterwards, we are to believe that the pious mother of Constantine came to Jerusalem in search of the true cross in the year 326, when she was seventy-nine years old. Guided by a divine intimation, or by an old Jew, or by both or neither, she ascertained the proper site to excavate; and, having cleared away the rubbish which the heathen had thrown upon it, her exertions were finally rewarded by the discovery of three crosses at the bottom of the cave. The superscription over that of Christ was lying by itself; and as the three crosses were alike, a great perplexity troubled the queen as to the one on which the Saviour died. Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem, solved the painful doubt by the test of miracles. Two of the crosses, when laid upon the sick, produced no effect; but on applying the third to a noble lady who was then at the point of death, she immediately sprang up perfectly healed. Having thus found the true cross, Helena proceeded to distribute the precious relic as follows: the larger part was left in the chapel which she erected over the cave of the invention; taking the remainder to Constantinople, she sent a part to Rome, where a church was built specially for it; Constantine placed his portion in the head of a statue of himself. The title was also sent to Rome, and deposited in the Church of Santa Croce, where it remains to this day, as the devout believe. The bishops of Jerusalem sold such an innumerable multitude of little pieces from their portion, that the faith of the world as to their genuineness was staggered, and doubtless would have utterly failed, if it had not been ascertained that the wood had the miraculous power of growing, by which the original fragment was not diminished, even though enough to build an ark had been cut away from it. This was another very convenient and profitable invention.

The Persian, Chosroes II., when he captured the Holy City, in 614, carried away the remnant of the true cross to his capital; but it was soon after restored to Jerusalem by the Emperor Heraclius. The main fragment of the cross was utterly lost about the time that Jerusalem surrendered to the Khalif Omar, in the seventh century; and the utmost that can be claimed now is that a small portion of it is incorporated into the large cross in the Chapel of the Invention. Probably the idol-hating Saracens profanely destroyed the sacred relic.

As to the crown of thorns and the nails, very little is known. Individual thorns have been deposited in various localities; and of the four or fourteen nails, the Empress Helena threw one into the sea to calm a dreadful tempest; Constantine put one into his helmet, and another was made into a bit for his bridle, which was afterwards transferred to the Duomo of Milan. Treves has a fourth nail; and Santa Croce, in Rome, has or had the one which, some maintained, was placed by Constantine in his helmet. If this account does not satisfy your curiosity, you must have recourse to those who find more edification in such legendary lore.

XVI.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Visit to el Haram esh Sherîf.—Dimensions of the Haram Area.—The Temple Area.—Portions of the Ancient Wall still remaining.—Marks of Solomon's Architects.—North Wall of the Temple Area obliterated.—El Mawâzîn, the Scales.—Catherwood's Description of the Haram Area.—Saracenic Pulpit.—Interior of the Dome of the Rock.—Es Sŭkhrah, the Sacred Rock.—Site of the Altar of Solomon's Temple.—Cave beneath es Sŭkhrah.—Jâmi'a el Aksa.—Vaults beneath the South-eastern Corner of the Haram Area.—Captain Warren's Theory regarding the Site of the Temple.—Solomon's Palace.—Solomon's Stables.—Cloister of Herod.—Jesus questioned by the Jews in Solomon's Porch.—The Apostles in Solomon's Porch.—Mount Moriah.—Abraham and Isaac.—David and Araunah.—Solomon and the Temple.—Destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians.—Dedication of the Walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah.—Dedication of the Restored Temple by Herod.—Destruction of the Temple by Titus.—Fulfilment of Christ's Prediction.—The Golden Gate.—Cisterns beneath the Temple Area.—Water-supply of the Temple.—Adequate Supply of Water within the City when besieged.—Size and Extent of Ancient Jerusalem.—Valley across the North-east Corner of the Haram.—Pool of Bethesda.—Birket Isrâîl.—Tower of Antonia.—Rescue of Paul by the Roman Garrison.—Pompey.—Titus.—Adrian.—Wailing-place of the Jews.—Robinson's Arch.—Discovery of the Pier by Captain Warren.—Rock-cut Channel and Bridge in the Bed of the Tyropœon.—Wilson's Arch.—Bâb el Mughâribeh.—Double Gate.—Triple Gate.—Single Gate.—Moslem Cemetery.—Results of Captain Warren's Explorations.—Tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.—Tomb of Zechariah.—Tomb of St. James.—Tomb of Absalom.—Tomb of Jehoshaphat.—Graves of the Jews on Olivet.—Retrospective Reflections regarding the Historic Significance of the Temple Mount.—Typical and Symbolical Allusions to the Temple in the Old and New Testaments.

April 30th. Evening.

By the usual means we gained admittance to-day to "the noble sanctuary," or el Haram esh Sherîf, as it was called by our Moslem guide, whom we procured to accompany us on our visit to the noteworthy sites within it.

It is a curious fact that no two writers agree as to the exact dimensions of the Haram platform. The west wall is about sixteen hundred feet long, though Mr. Catherwood gives sixteen hundred

and seventeen. The east wall is about fifteen hundred and twenty feet long, but Dr. Robinson makes it fifteen hundred and twenty-eight. The area is nearly one hundred feet broader at the north end than at the south, though measurements again differ—Catherwood making the north wall ten hundred and twenty feet long, and the south nine hundred and forty; while Robinson gives ten hundred and sixty one way, by nine hundred and fifty-five the other. A careful comparison of a dozen measurements shows divergences along every line, but our own numbers are sufficiently near the truth; and the result of all only shows that, in shape, the Haram platform is not an exact parallelogram, and that no two of the walls are of the same length, or run exactly parallel to each other. The area thus defined is much larger than was that of the Temple, though even this has been questioned. By an apparent consent, however, amongst critics, the Tower of Antonia is supposed to have occupied the north-west corner of the Haram area, but just how much of the space was thus taken up cannot now be ascertained; and this renders it difficult, if not impossible, to fix with certainty the precise site of the Temple itself. The common opinion is that the Temple, at least that of Herod, was erected on or near the platform upon which the Kubbet es Sŭkhrah—Dome of the Rock, or Mosk of Omar—now stands; and, with its various enclosing walls, courts, and cloisters, the space occupied by it may have been about nine hundred feet from east to west, and not far from six hundred feet from north to south. This is Captain Warren's theory, and may be the correct one, though others believe that the Temple area was an exact square. The portions of the east wall still remaining, and of the west wall at the Jews' place of wailing, are undoubtedly ancient. The same is probably true, in the main, with regard to the existing south wall; nor is there any reason to believe that Nehemiah, when he repaired the wall of Jerusalem, constructed it on new foundations; and no doubt Herod, also, built upon old foundations when he restored the Temple.[1]

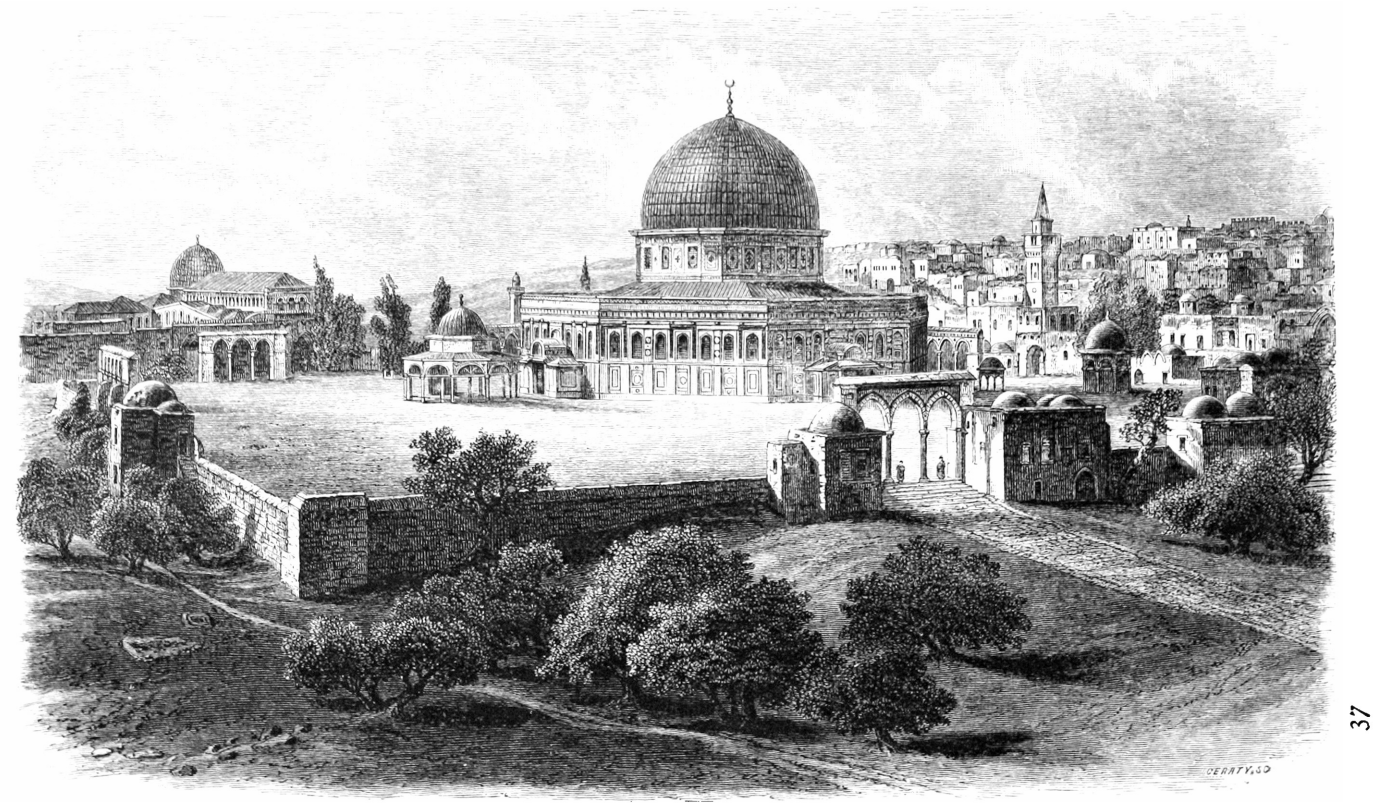
One of the most interesting discoveries of Captain Warren is supposed to prove that the eastern wall of the present Haram area is part of, or built upon, the foundations laid down by King Solo-

[1] Neh. ii. 17; iii. 1–32; iv. 6.

mon. By means of a shaft and gallery driven beneath the Moslem graves that abound along the line of that wall, this foundation was reached on its eastern side; and upon the stones there found were discovered the marks and signs of the Phœnician builders, which, in all probability, were made by the architects sent to Solomon by Hiram, King of Tyre. The west wall at the Jews' wailing-place, doubtless, rests upon foundations equally ancient. The north wall of the Temple area appears to have been entirely obliterated, probably by the Romans, for Titus made his attacks against the Holy House from that quarter, and would necessarily demolish that wall during the siege and destruction of the Temple. According to this, the northern part of the present Haram area appertained to the Tower of Antonia and its outworks, and the large space thus occupied—perhaps one-third of the whole—must have been subsequently cleared of ruins and included within the present area of the Haram. This was probably accomplished gradually, age after age, as the materials that encumbered the space were needed in the construction of the city walls or the erection of castles and houses; until, finally, what rubbish remained was carried off by the Moslems, in order to enlarge the approach to their magnificent Mosk of es Sŭkhrah.

With no other escort but our Muhammedan guide, we entered the jealously guarded precincts of the Haram, and were conducted down a gradual decline, for some distance over smooth rock, and thence upon the sward, or grass, to the foot of a flight of steps which lead up to the lofty and pointed arches which stand on the paved platform of the mosk, called el Mawâzîn, or the Scales, because on the Day of Judgment the scales are to be suspended there to weigh the evil and the righteous. Most of the pavement is of the common limestone of the country, and detracts from the general appearance of that extensive platform, and of the various small structures reared here and there upon its surface.

A detailed description of this platform, and the general area of the Haram, is given by Mr. Catherwood, with whom I was well acquainted, who spent six weeks in and about the mosk, taking measurements, and making plans and drawings. He entered by the main gate-way, on the west side, and says:



KUBBET ES SŬKHRAH—DOME OF THE ROCK.

"In going from the gate-way to the mosk, a distance of one hundred and fifty feet, several praying-places of the Muhammedans are passed, with one or two elegant fountains, surmounted by beautiful cupolas, overshadowed by cypress and plane trees. The great platform is in general about fifteen or sixteen feet above the area, and is reached by three flights of stairs on the western side, above which are elegant pointed archways, probably of the same age as the mosk. Of these there are also on the south side two, on the north side two, and on the east side one. At various intervals between these are apartments under and attached to the platform appropriated to the poorest class of Muhammedan pilgrims.

"This extensive platform is four hundred and fifty feet from east to west, and five hundred and fifty feet from north to south, paved, in part, with marble. On it are several small and elegant praying-places—one especially, said to have been used by Fatima, the daughter of the prophet; and on the south is a sumptuous, elegant, and highly wrought pulpit of the richest marble. On the east side, within a few feet of the mosk, is a building resembling a fountain, composed of columns and arches, with a praying-place towards Mecca, and which, according to tradition, was the judgment-seat of King David."[1]

The pulpit mentioned by Mr. Catherwood, and which undoubtedly was shown to you, merits special attention. It stands on the platform, in the south-eastern corner, and was constructed entirely of marble by Burhân ed Dîn, in A.H. 798, and still bears his name. Bartlett speaks of "the Muhammedan pulpit and staircase close to the southern gate" as "an exquisite specimen of Arabian architecture." The ornamental carving on the stairway leading up to it, upon the pulpit itself, its horseshoe arches, resting upon slender cluster columns, and about the arched cupola above it, justly attracts the admiration of all visitors to the Dome of the Rock. This pulpit is still in use, especially during the month of Ramadân, when a sermon is preached every Friday to the fasting faithful assembled on the pavement below, by a Khatîb or Imâm attached to the mosk.

Having put on our yellow slippers, purchased for the occasion,

[1] Bartlett's Walks about Jerusalem.



MINBAR BURHÂN ED DÎN—SARACENIC PULPIT IN THE HARAM.

we walked across the platform, and entered the great mosk of the Dome of the Rock. Apart from the associations natural to the place, a solemn hush pervaded the entire edifice, and the few worshippers present moved noiselessly about from place to place.

The lower part of this "noble sanctuary" is an octagon, and each of the eight sides are sixty-seven feet long. The lofty dome is a masterpiece of Oriental architecture, and the entire design of the building is Byzantine. It is about one hundred and seventy feet high, and rests upon four massive piers; but the interior is encumbered with numerous columns, arches, and fantastic designs for the suspension of countless lamps, which mar the general effect.

The most interesting object within the mosk is the rock es Sŭkhrah, directly below the centre of the dome. It is surrounded by twelve columns, and encircled by a gilded iron railing, and overhung with a rich canopy of what appears to be crimson silk.

This sacred rock is of the native limestone, and is about sixty feet long by forty-five feet broad. Major Wilson thus describes it: "The rock stands four feet nine and a half inches above the marble pavement at its highest point, and one foot at its lowest. The surface of the rock bears the mark of hard treatment and rough chiselling; on the western side it is cut down in three steps, and on the northern side in an irregular shape. At the south-west corner of the rock is shown the 'Footprint of Muhammed,' where the prophet's foot last touched earth on his heavenward journey; and hard by, on the west, is the 'Handprint of Gabriel,' where the angel seized the rock and held it down by main force as it was rising with Muhammed."

From this rock, es Sŭkhrah, the entire edifice, commonly known as the Mosk of Omar, takes the name of Kubbet es Sŭkhrah—the Dome of the Rock—and it is regarded by Moslems and Jews as one of the most sacred spots on the face of the earth. There is nothing remarkable in its appearance, but one is greatly surprised to see it there at all. It is certainly a remnant of the highest part of the original ridge of Mount Moriah, and may have been much as it now appears when Solomon's architects cut away the top of the ridge, to level off and widen the platform upon which the Temple stood.

What could have been the object in leaving it thus?

This question has received many answers, and the crop of superstitious legends—Jewish, Christian, and Moslem—that has sprung up around it is very large, and some of them are very curious.

Could it be established that the Temple was erected on that platform, and in such a position as to allow of the Sŭkhrah being the centre or foundation of the great altar of sacrifice, I should gladly acquiesce in that conclusion; and if it could be proved that the large excavated cave below the south-east end of the rock, with its well, called by the Muhammedans Bîr el Arwâh—the Well of Souls—had any connection with the sacrifices which were offered

upon it, possibly as a drain to carry off the blood and other impurities necessarily resulting from the sacrificial services, I should accept that also. The time must come when all these matters can be scientifically examined, and until then we must rest contented with hypothesis and conjecture. But the possibility that there we look upon the very spot where, for so many long centuries of promise and prophecy, the people of God performed those sacrifices which foreshadowed and typified that greater sacrifice of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," is very impressive.

Mr. Catherwood says the superficial area of the chamber, or cave, beneath the rock is about six hundred feet, the average height being seven feet. It derives a peculiar sanctity from having been successively, according to Muhammedan tradition, the praying-place of Abraham, David, Solomon, and Jesus. In the centre of the rocky pavement of the cave is a circular slab of marble, which, being struck, returns a hollow sound, showing that there is a well or excavation beneath, which is regarded by the Moslems as the entrance to Hades. "I was gravely informed," he adds, "that this well [Bîr el Arwâh] was open until about forty years since, and up to that period was frequented by those who were desirous of holding converse with the souls of the departed confined below; but that a certain widow, who was more than ordinarily curious and communicative, carried such intelligence from the living to the dead, and from the dead to the living, as to disturb the peace of many families in the city, and caused such commotion below, that, the noise getting too outrageous, the well had to be closed to prevent further mischief-making."

We had no time to examine a tenth part of the attractions of this remarkable sanctuary; and after glancing at corridors, columns, lofty arches and domes, and the many-colored marbles and tiles with which the lower walls are adorned, and trying to count the fifty-six slender-pointed windows arranged round what may be called the second story of the mosk, we reluctantly took leave of all its splendor, and, passing out southwards through a handsome porch, proceeded some three hundred and fifty feet to the Mosk of el Aksa.

El Aksa is regarded by the Moslems with more respect, perhaps,



JÂMI'A EL AKSA—THE REMOTEST MOSK.

than the Dome of the Rock, and the two together are considered as forming one great temple, which, with all their precincts, is now called el Haram esh Sherîf. It takes the name el Aksa—the Remotest—to distinguish it from the other holy places, as Mecca and Medina, and is in shape a large oblong edifice, about two hundred and eighty feet from north to south, and one hundred and eighty feet from east to west. It is generally believed to have been the church built by Justinian, although, like almost everything else, this, too, has been questioned. It resembles ancient churches in many respects; has a nave and six side aisles, with numerous columns of different sizes, and of various styles of architecture, and some of no known order whatever. At the south end is a fine dome, and beneath it a handsome pulpit.

We were so hurried here that I have but a confused recollection of the numerous passages down and up and along which we were conducted by our guide, who seemed anxious to get through with his uncongenial task. We merely looked into the Mosk of Abu Bekr, on the south-west of el Aksa—a plain narrow room, more than two hundred feet long. One large apartment was said to be appropriated exclusively to the women, as they are not allowed to appear in the grand mosk. That part of the general area abounds in noble shade-trees, which add greatly to the picturesque effect of the place. After resting a few moments, we proceeded along the wall for some distance to the south-eastern corner of the area.

When I visited the Haram, many years ago, a part of the general platform, which there covers the famous series of vaults below, had fallen in, and thus there was free access to them. I was in some respects more interested in those subterranean vaults than in the mosks, because they revealed so distinctly the original configuration of Mount Moriah, and also showed clearly the character of the substructions upon which the level platform of the Haram area had been supported. There is no available access to them at present, for the vaults have been rebuilt. There are some fifteen rows of square piers, constructed of large, rough, irregular blocks, and from these sprang the arches which vaulted over and raised to the proper level the space above, which was then made to conform with the

surface of the Haram area. As the rock rises rapidly towards the north, the height of these piers is very unequal—some of them at the south end are nearly forty feet high, while at the north end they are not more than ten feet high. I got the impression that this work, in its present shape, was not very ancient, but that the blocks with which the piers were built had been gathered from the débris of Herod's Temple, and laid up without any regard to architectural effect or fitness. The roof of these vaults may have fallen in and been repaired many times.

If the temple of Herod, with its corridors, cloisters, and courts, occupied the entire southern space of the present Haram enclosure, there must always have been some such system of supporting piers and arches beneath it, since the rock at the south-eastern angle falls away steeply towards the south.

Captain Warren mentions the theories and plans of nearly twenty authors in regard to the position of Solomon's Temple and the edifices connected with it. His own opinion is, as you may remember, that the Temple, with its courts, occupied a parallelogram extending quite across from the present eastern wall to that on the west, in length nine hundred feet, and having a width of six hundred feet. The Temple itself stood upon or near the platform of the Dome of the Rock. Between it and the south wall of the general area Captain Warren supposes that there was a space three hundred feet wide from north to south, and nine hundred feet long from east to west, upon which was erected Solomon's palace and adjoining buildings. To raise that part, where the rock drops steeply down southwards, to the level of the Temple area, vaults were erected, which probably occupied the place of those now called Solomon's stables. The eastern part of Solomon's palace must, therefore, have stood upon those vaults.

As I understand the description by Josephus of the grand arcade or cloister erected by Herod, it also occupied that area, and extended along the entire length of it, from the Kidron to the Tyropœon, a distance of nine hundred feet. Josephus calls it the royal cloister, and says it "deserves to be mentioned better than any other under the sun;" and, admitting the truthfulness of his description, I am of the same opinion. Throughout the entire length

there were four rows of columns, twenty-seven feet high and six feet in diameter—one hundred and sixty in all—"forming three intervals for walking." The middle interval was forty-five feet wide, and those on either side of it thirty feet. The roof over the centre was seventy-five feet high, and that over either porch fifty feet. Including the diameter of the columns, and allowing for thickness of walls, the width of this royal cloister of King Herod must have been about one hundred and thirty-five feet. Truly it was a noble porch, and we may well try to reconstruct it, in imagination, as the Saviour and the apostles saw it.

At the time of Christ it was called Solomon's porch, and under that name it is repeatedly mentioned in the New Testament. Indeed, it is the only part almost of the Temple or its buildings which can be confidently associated with Jesus and his disciples. "And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me."[1] There, also, "the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, and all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."[2] And from Acts v. 12 it appears that the apostles were accustomed to preach to the people in this same royal cloister—"and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch."

I felt reluctant to leave the platform of the "noble sanctuary," and the area of el Haram esh Sherîf. They occupy by far the most interesting locality in or about Jerusalem, and in many respects the most important to the Christian world.

This must be admitted by all; for, if we are right in our theories, it was to that spot on Mount Moriah that the Father of the Faithful came to offer up his first-born and well-beloved son Isaac. That area includes the threshing-floor where the angel that was about to destroy Jerusalem stood, and which King David was commanded to purchase of Araunah the Jebusite, that he might rear an altar there

[1] John x. 22–25. [2] Acts iii. 11.

to the Lord, and offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon it. "So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel," as we read in the last chapter of 2 Samuel. The next remarkable scene that occurred there was the dedication of the Temple by King Solomon. For seven long years that glorious edifice slowly grew up in strange and solemn stillness; for "there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."[1] When complete and ready, then was that area thronged with a mighty assemblage of all the tribes. "And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the Lord our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days."[2]

After a little more than four hundred years the Holy House was burned and overthrown by the Babylonians, and continued desolate for more than a century, when there was another grand dedication of the rebuilt Temple, and again that area must have been crowded with the remnants of the Hebrew nation that had returned from the Captivity at the dedication of the restored walls of Jerusalem, as recorded in the twelfth chapter of Nehemiah. After the lapse of four troubled centuries the Holy House was again restored; forty and six years was it in building, and dedicated by Herod the Great. Another century passed away, and then came the Romans under Titus. Jerusalem and the Jewish nation were destroyed, with horrors unparalleled in the history of the world; the Temple was sacked, pillaged, burnt, and utterly overthrown, so that not one stone of the Temple proper was left upon another, as foretold by Christ.[3] And all history goes to establish the fact that even those ancient remnants of the outer walls which still astonish the visitor will ultimately crumble to dust and disappear. And now for eighteen hundred years it has lain desolate, and will so continue until that day and hour shall arrive of whose coming "knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven," but the Father only.

It would require a volume to give a detailed account of the strange fortunes and misfortunes which have befallen this Haram esh Sherîf, and the end is not yet. For the last eleven hundred

[1] 1 Kings vi. 7. [2] 1 Kings viii. 65. [3] Matt. xxiv. 2.

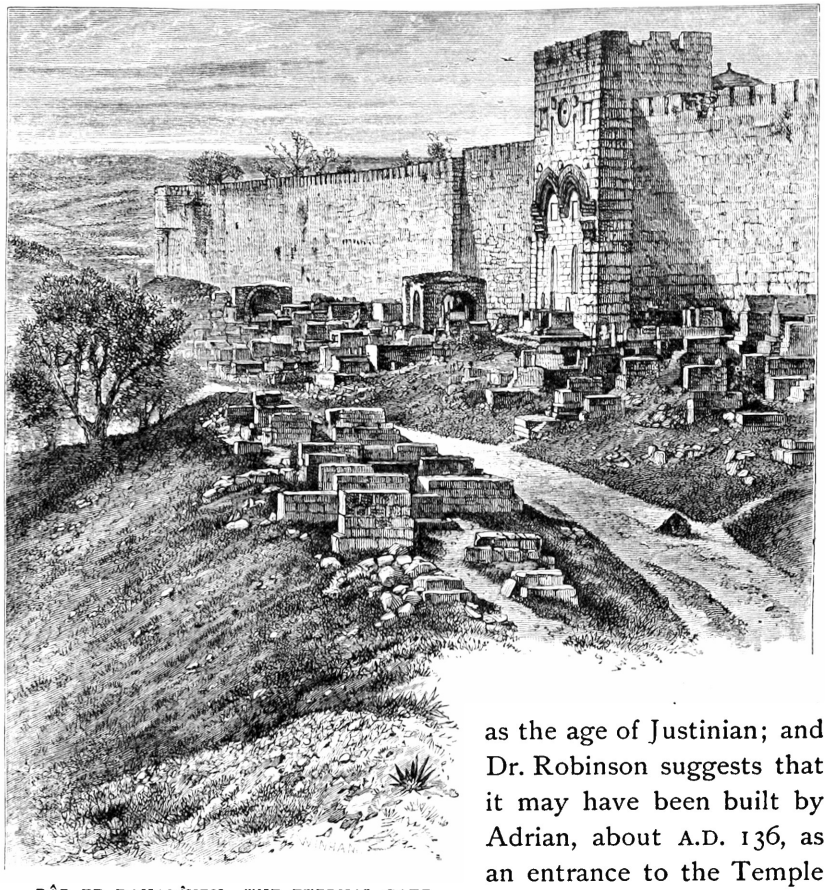
years and more it has been in the hands of fanatical Moslems, varied only by the Frank dominion during the Crusades. To predict the future destinies of a place whose past has been so checkered would be rash and presumptuous. One thing, however, is likely to change its relations to the world at no distant day. The Muhammedan power is fast passing away, the Turkish Empire is hastening to its fall, and after that the emancipation of the Haram looms up very distinctly; this Holy City and this sacred area will come under other rulers, and its mysteries will then be laid open to the inspection of mankind.

About one thousand and fifty feet from the south-east angle of the wall of the Haram area stands the Golden Gate. It occupies the middle of a slight projection fifty-five feet long, and extending outwards six feet from the line of the east wall.

The double gate-way being walled up, one can see but little of its architectural proportions from the outside, except the two semicircular Roman arches, and the Corinthian capitals, covered with profuse ornamentation. It is unusually rich in names. By the Crusaders it was called Porta Aurea—the Golden Gate—and it is generally so called at the present day. Through some confusion of name and place it early became connected with one of the gates of the Temple, known as the Beautiful Gate, where the lame man whom Peter healed was laid daily to ask alms.[1] The Arabic name for the entire gate-way is Bâb ed Daharîyeh—the Eternal Gate; for the south portal, Bâb er Rahmeh—the Gate of Mercy; and for the north portal, Bâb et Taubeh—the Gate of Repentance.

The Golden Gate has given rise to many contradictory theories in regard to its age, the builder, and the purpose for which it was erected. It is near the north-east corner of the Temple area, and was probably erected upon the foundations of a more ancient gateway, of which there are some indications in immediate connection with it. It was walled up even at the time of the Crusaders, but was thrown open once a year, on Palm-Sunday, in celebration of our Lord's supposed triumphal entry through it into the Temple. Mr. Fergusson asserts, on architectural grounds, that it could not have been constructed before the time of Constantine, nor so late

[1] Acts iii. 2, 10.



BÂB ED DAHARÎYEH—THE ETERNAL GATE.
EXTERIOR OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

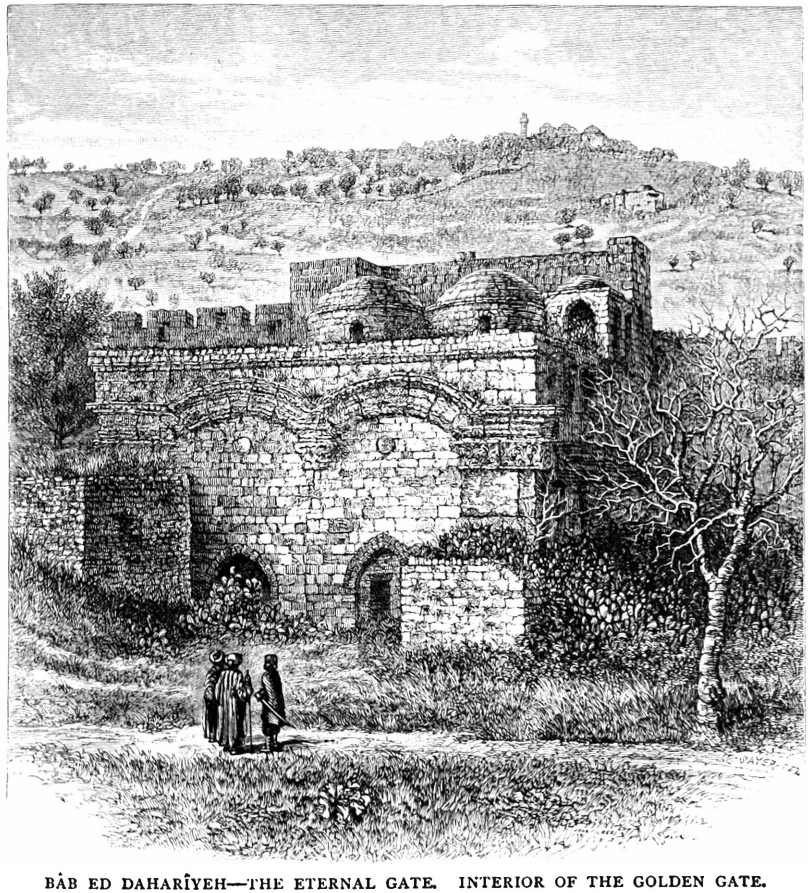
as the age of Justinian; and Dr. Robinson suggests that it may have been built by Adrian, about A.D. 136, as an entrance to the Temple of Jupiter, which he erected on the site of the Jewish Temple, and in which he placed an equestrian statue of himself, on the supposed spot where the Holy of Holies stood.

The interior of the Golden Gate is several feet below the level of the Haram area, extending inwards for some distance. It had a groined roof, supported on rows of Corinthian columns, which must have formed a stately portico of Roman workmanship. Mr. Fergusson thus describes it: "The entablature is carried along the wall from pilaster to pilaster, as a mere ornament, under an arch, which is the real constructive form of the roof. The order is still purely Corinthian. The Ionic order, in the centre, is of a more

debased character, but not unlike some of the latest specimens in Rome, and may have been copied from some local types, the original of which we do not now possess." It is now used as a Muhammedan place of prayer.

My Moslem guide assured me that, "at the end of the age," Jesus, the son of Mary, would enter through that gate-way, and take possession, not of Jerusalem only but of the whole world.

Some such expectation appears to have long prevailed amongst them, and this may be one reason for keeping the gate-way walled up; but there is no need of an entrance to the Haram area at that place, or it would probably be reopened.



BÂB ED DAHARÎYEH—THE ETERNAL GATE. INTERIOR OF THE GOLDEN GATE.

The view from the top of the Golden Gate over the city, the valley of Jehoshaphat, and especially of Olivet, is very distinct, and no visitor should fail to see it.

I noticed a number of openings that looked like wells, and actually saw men and women drawing up water with a rope and bucket. Are there now any fountains and pools below the surface of the Haram?

There was probably no fountain on the rocky termination of Mount Moriah, where Araunah had his summer threshing-floor; but when, by the erection of the Temple, that spot became the religious centre of the Hebrew nation, an adequate and never-failing supply of water came to be absolutely necessary. Solomon's architects, as they reared up the prodigious walls from the valleys below to enlarge the platform above, would utilize much of the vacant space between those walls and the cliffs of the mount by forming great reservoirs for water. There was nothing new in that. The entire city of Jerusalem was then, and is now, mainly dependent upon cisterns. Every house is provided with them, and recent explorations have abundantly confirmed former traditions that the whole mount, below the Haram platform, is completely honey-combed with such reservoirs—one of them so large as to be called a bahr, or sea.

Originally these cisterns were filled by rain-water during the winter, as is still the case with those now in use. But afterwards an aqueduct brought the water from Solomon's pools to the Temple area, and probably the cisterns beneath were filled from its surplus waters. It is possible, also, that the water from some of the pools outside the city was conducted thither by pipes and channels which have long since been destroyed. Captain Warren, of the Palestine Exploration Fund, has discovered many such ancient channels, and examined more than thirty cisterns beneath the Haram area, some of them of enormous size—one capable of holding seven hundred thousand gallons, and another still more capacious. Indeed, the number and size of the wells, cisterns, and pools in the city, and under the Haram area, is quite surprising; and no doubt there are many more concealed beneath the great accumulations of rubbish in the ravines, and under the houses of the city. Under-

ground Jerusalem offers to the future explorer a boundless field for his labors, and almost the only one that remains to be worked out.

Two important inferences are suggested by this complicated system of pools, channels, cisterns, and wells to secure an adequate supply of water. The first is that the population of the ancient city must have been very great. Very few of the public tanks, reservoirs, and cisterns are now kept in repair to supply the present city, and the crowds of pilgrims who annually gather here. The dependence is almost entirely upon the small cisterns in the native houses.

The second inference is that Jerusalem was, in ancient times, liable to suffer from a scarcity of water, just as is now the case with the modern city. This is, in fact, the most frequent cause of anxiety and distress. In seasons when the rains are abundant and timely, no difficulty from this source is experienced; but often the rainfall is long delayed and inadequate, and then the inhabitants suffer severely from scarcity of water.

Again, the number and vast capacity of these reservoirs explain the historic fact that in all her ancient sieges Jerusalem never was obliged to surrender for want of water. The besiegers without suffered greatly from scarcity of water, but not the inhabitants within the city. And it is evident that, when all her cisterns were in repair and available, there could never have been any distress from that cause.

The excavating of these cisterns was remarkably easy. The upper crust of the surface upon which the city stands is limestone rock, called by the natives mezzeh, which is extremely hard. Below this is a chalk formation of great thickness, called malaki, easily worked, and the upper crust forms an admirable roof. These physical characteristics are seen on a great scale in the Cotton Grotto, where this roof spreads unbroken over the excavations for several hundred feet, and the malaki formation is soft and white as purest chalk. Cisterns of any desired size and depth can be excavated in it with perfect safety and at small expense.

One of the results, valuable to all Biblical students of every country, which the Exploration Fund excavations furnish, is the abundant confirmation as to the size and extent of ancient Jerusa-

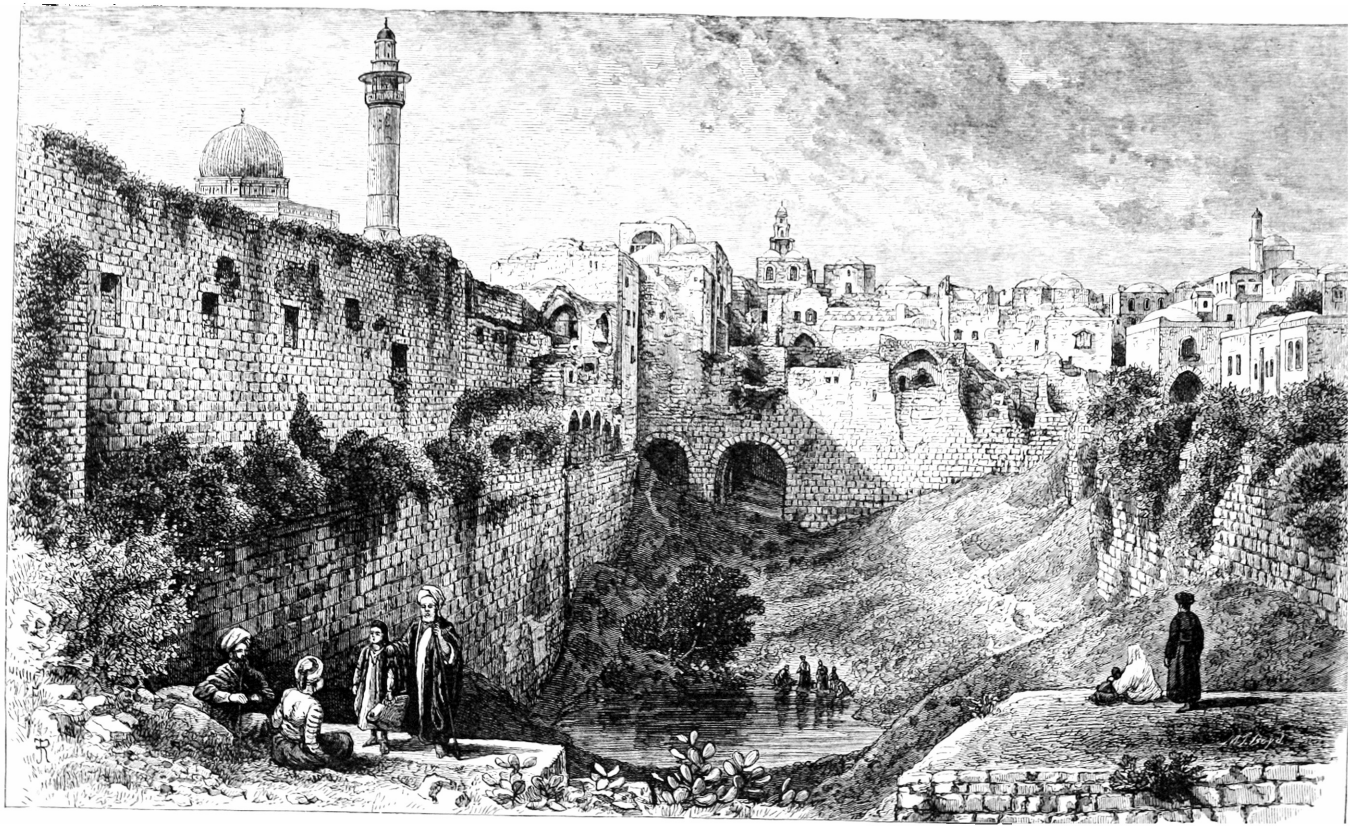
lem. There is no exaggeration amongst Biblical writers with regard to these matters. Indeed, the whole reading world has been surprised at the revelations made by those excavations, and one can only regret that Turkish jealousy and Moslem fanaticism rendered it impossible to carry the explorations farther in some of the most important localities.

Captain Warren established, amongst other discoveries, the important fact that a valley cut across the north-eastern corner of the Haram area, and descended into the valley of the Kidron—from which it is evident that originally the Temple area was an isolated crag or rocky saddle of no great extent; and, further, that Birket Isrâîl—the so-called pool of Bethesda—which now looks like an immense fosse to defend the northern end of the area, occupies, in part at least, the bed of this ravine.

There is no reason to suppose that this deep fosse has any connection with that pool of Bethesda so familiar to all from the interesting incident in the history of our Lord recorded in the fifth chapter of John: "Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market [or gate[1]] a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath."[2]

Birket Isrâîl has received the name of the pool of Bethesda on account of its proximity to St. Stephen's Gate, supposed to occupy the site of the sheep market, or gate by the pool; but it remains

[1] Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39. [2] John v. 1–16.



BIRKET ISRÂÎL—POOL OF BETHESDA.

to be shown that the present Bâb el Ŭsbât is St. Stephen's Gate, and whether this in its turn was the Sheep Gate — all of which identifications are not believed to be correct.

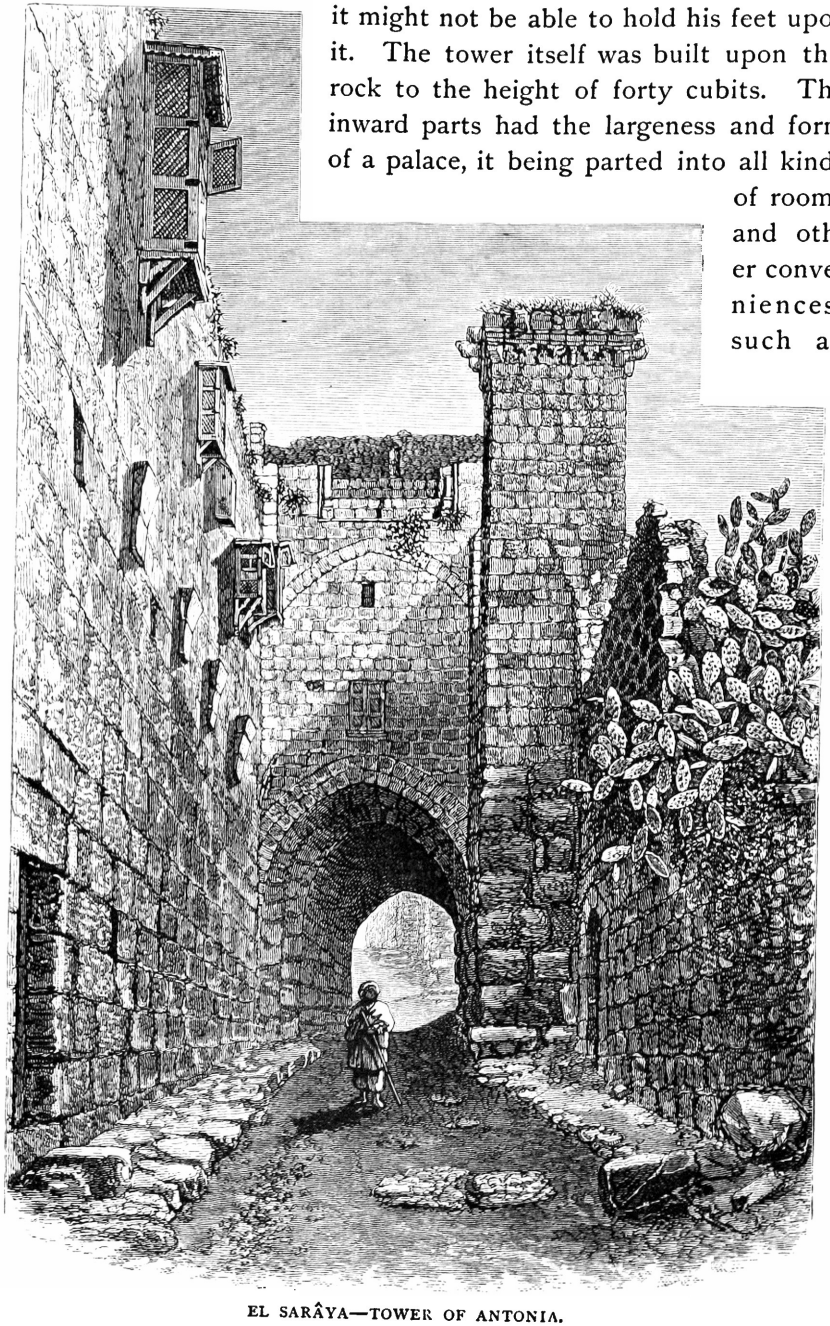
Birket Isrâîl deserves attention on its own account. It was an immense reservoir, three hundred and sixty feet long from east to west, one hundred and thirty wide, and at present it is over seventy feet deep to the rubbish which has accumulated at the bottom. We will not discuss the various theories that have been advocated regarding it. I think it highly probable, however, that it was part of the system of defence connected with the Tower of Antonia, and may have been in part a fosse, and also a reservoir of water for the use of the Roman garrison. It now rarely contains water, but formerly it may have been filled, for it has a lining of cement and small stones upon the sides and on the bottom. At the south-west corner it has two arched vaults extending westwards under the modern houses of the city. Captain Warren found that the southern vault terminates at a wall of masonry one hundred and thirty-four feet from the entrance; but the northern vault opens, at a distance of one hundred and eighteen feet, into a small arched passage running north and south. This gives to the whole—pool and vaults—an extreme length of nearly five hundred feet.

The present Sarâya, or governor's residence, with its square tower and gloomy vault spanning the Via Dolorosa, where it begins its winding course at the traditional house of Pilate, is supposed to occupy the extreme north-west angle of the fortress of Antonia.

It is plain, from various notices in Josephus, that that fortress, with its courts and camps, occupied a part of the northern area of the Haram; but how large a portion of it is not easily determined. It must, however, have extended quite across the area, from east to west, if the immense reservoir or moat now called Birket Isrâîl was connected with it as its defensive fosse. Nearly all we know about it is from Josephus, who describes it as a quadrangular fortress, erected first by the Maccabees, and called Baris, and afterwards rebuilt by Herod with great strength and splendor.

He says it was "a rock fifty cubits high, which Herod covered over with smooth pieces of stone from its foundation, both for ornament, and that any one who would either try to get up or go down

it might not be able to hold his feet upon it. The tower itself was built upon this rock to the height of forty cubits. The inward parts had the largeness and form of a palace, it being parted into all kinds of rooms and other conveniences, such as



EL SARÂYA—TOWER OF ANTONIA.

courts and places for bathing, and broad spaces for camps, insomuch that, by having all conveniences that cities wanted, it might seem to be composed of several cities: but by its magnificence it seemed to be a palace; and as the entire structure resembled that of a tower, it contained also four other distinct towers at its four corners, whereof the others were but fifty cubits high, whereas that which lay upon the south-east corner was seventy cubits high, that from thence the whole Temple might be viewed; but on the corner where it joined the two cloisters of the Temple it had passages down to them both, through which the guard went several ways amongst the cloisters with their arms, on the Jewish festivals, in order to watch the people, that they might not then attempt to make any innovations, for the Temple was a fortress that guarded the city, as was the Tower of Antonia a guard to the Temple."[1]

It was doubtless down some of the passages from the fortress to those cloisters of the Temple that "the chief captain of the band immediately took soldiers and centurions," when he heard "that all Jerusalem was in an uproar, and ran down to" the rescue of Paul. "And when they [the people] saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul." And as Paul was being "carried into the castle, when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people;" and "standing on the stairs," facing that enraged mob, he "beckoned with the hand unto the people," and made them that noble address which is found in the twenty-second chapter of the Acts.[2] Considering the circumstances and the place, that was one of the most courageous acts which even the intrepid apostle to the Gentiles ever performed.

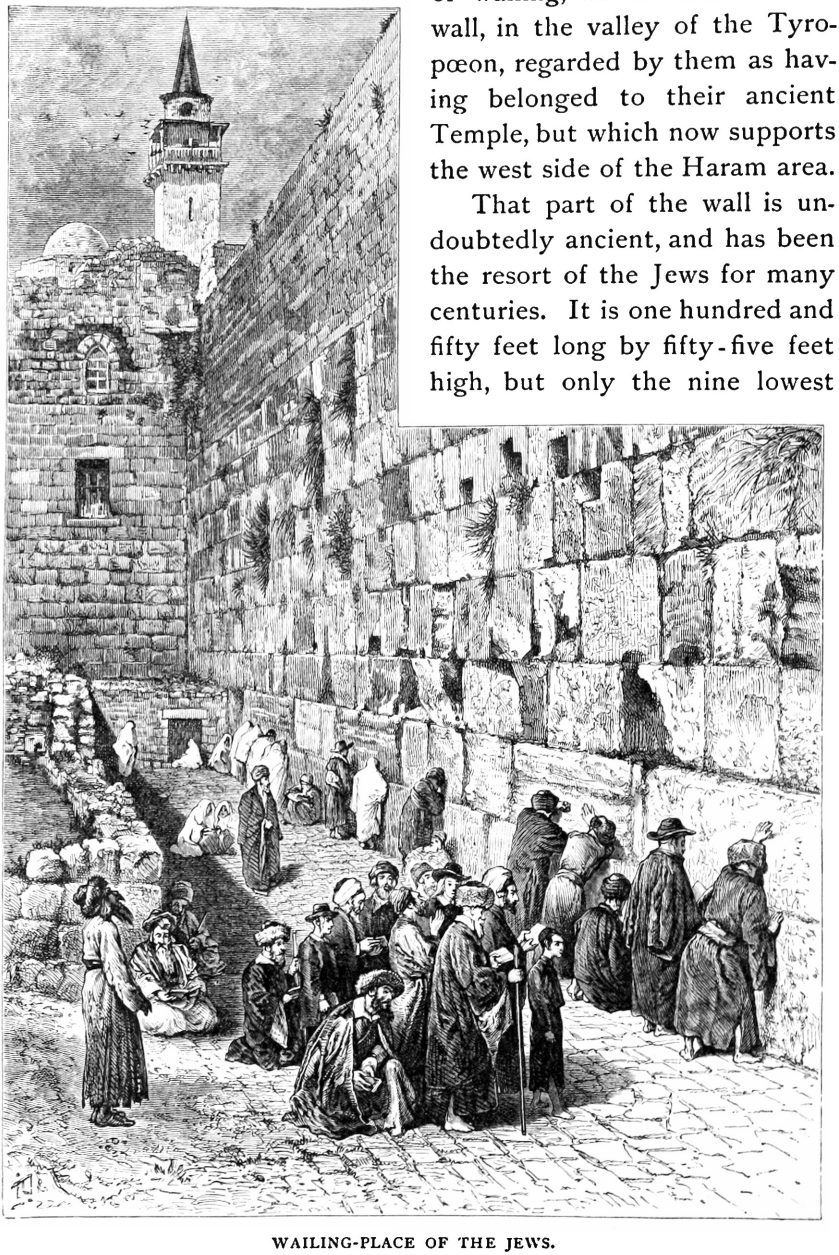
When Pompey attacked the Temple, the fortress of Antonia had become so identified with it that both were called by the general name of "the Temple;" and this fortress was probably partially pulled down by Titus, in order to facilitate the approach of his engines to the attack upon the Temple. It was doubtless rebuilt and fortified by Adrian when he restored the walls of Jerusalem, and erected his temple to Jupiter on the site of the ancient Jewish Temple; but of its subsequent history nothing is known.

[1] B. J. v. v. 8.

[2] Acts xxi. 31–40; xxii. 1–21.

After leaving the Haram we spent some time at the Jews' place of wailing, at the base of the wall, in the valley of the Tyropœon, regarded by them as having belonged to their ancient Temple, but which now supports the west side of the Haram area.

That part of the wall is undoubtedly ancient, and has been the resort of the Jews for many centuries. It is one hundred and fifty feet long by fifty-five feet high, but only the nine lowest



WAILING-PLACE OF THE JEWS.

courses of stone belong to the Herodian period. Some of the stones are very large, one measuring sixteen feet in length, another thirteen, and of proportionate height and thickness.

No sight meets the eye in Jerusalem more sadly suggestive than this wailing of the Jews over the ruins of their Temple. "Here, bowed in the dust, they may at least weep undisturbed over the fallen glory of their race, and bedew with their tears the soil which so many thousands of their forefathers once moistened with their blood." This touching custom of the Jews is very old, and in past centuries they had to pay large sums to their oppressors for the miserable privilege of kissing the stones and pouring out their lamentations over the remains of their ancient sanctuary. Every Friday they assemble there in great crowds, and, with trembling lips and tearful eyes, they sing or chant portions of Scripture and of their prayer-books, especially the words of the Prophet and the Psalmist: "Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste."[1] "O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. We are become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us. How long, Lord? wilt thou be angry forever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire? O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us; for we are brought very low."[2]

The Jews were expelled from Jerusalem after their revolt during the reign of Adrian, and the capture of the city by him. In the time of Constantine they were allowed to look upon Jerusalem from the surrounding hills, and to enter it once a year—on the day of its destruction by Titus—to wail over the ruins of the Temple. But this privilege they were obliged to purchase of the Roman soldiers.

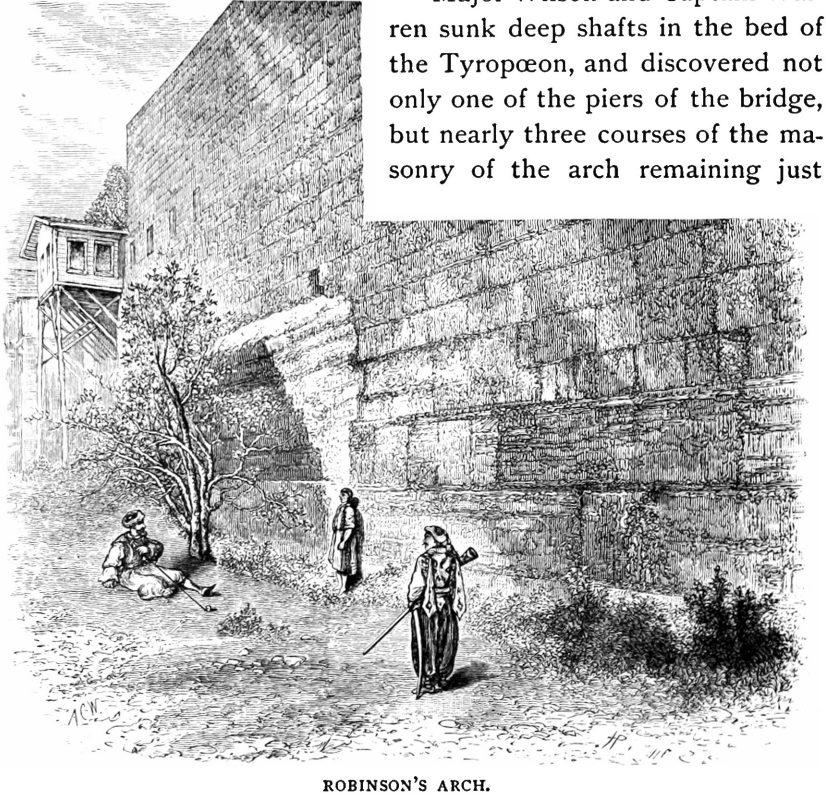
South of the wailing-place are the great stones of the arch which Dr. Robinson identified as part of the bridge on which Titus stood, in order to hold a parley with the Jews in the Temple. One of

[1] Isa. lxiv. 9–11.

[2] Psa. lxxix. 1, 4, 5, 8.

these stones is twenty-five feet long, another a little more than twenty, and the whole width of the bridge was about fifty-one feet; while its length across the Tyropœon to the perpendicular face of Zion could not have been less than three hundred and fifty. Of course there must have been several piers and arches. The whole causeway is supposed to have formed a magnificent passage from Zion to the south porch of the Temple. The identification, history, and object of this gigantic work have, in our day, furnished an arena of debate and strife almost as noisy and earnest as when the Temple was sacked and burned by the Romans. It has subsided now, and we shall do nothing to renew it.

Major Wilson and Captain Warren sunk deep shafts in the bed of the Tyropœon, and discovered not only one of the piers of the bridge, but nearly three courses of the masonry of the arch remaining just



ROBINSON'S ARCH.

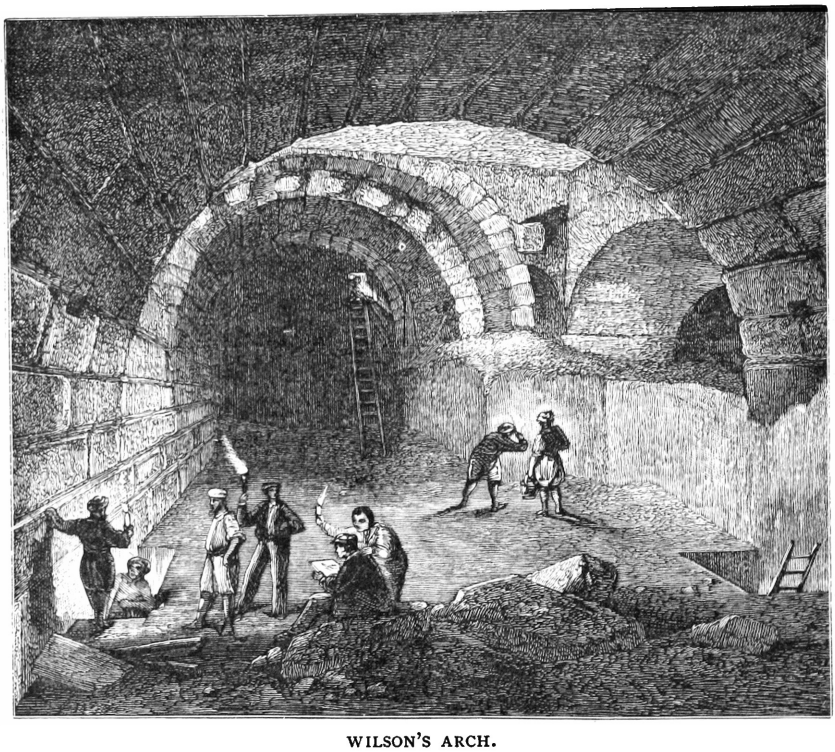
as they fell. The stones in the lowest tier are three and a half feet high; those in the next, three feet nine inches; and in the

third, four feet. The pier was fifty-one feet long and twelve feet thick, and was found opposite the remains of Robinson's Arch. At a depth of more than sixty feet below the springing of this arch they came upon a rock-cut channel or drain, twelve feet deep and four feet wide, the bottom of which is seventy-four feet below the springing of Robinson's Arch, and one hundred and seven below the level of the roadway of that bridge. Captain Warren says, in connection with this channel: "If we are to suppose that the roughly-faced stones at the south-west angle were never exposed to view, we must presume, also, that the two apparent voussoirs lying on the aqueduct under Robinson's Arch belonged to a bridge which crossed the Tyropœon valley previous to the building of the south-west angle of the Sanctuary." This would seem to imply that there was a bridge lower and more ancient than Robinson's Arch; and if the latter was constructed by Herod, the former could not have been of a later date than that of the restored Temple of Nehemiah, or even the Temple of Solomon itself.

These facts show clearly the great depth of the Tyropœon valley, and the consequent necessary height of the west wall of the Temple area. The excavations and the discoveries made by Major Wilson and Captain Warren, in regard to the age of the foundations around the base of the Temple Mount, are in themselves of the utmost importance.

Major Wilson, during a former visit, took our party to see the great subterranean arch, since named after him, which he had then recently discovered under Bâb es Silsileh—the Gate of the Chain—and north of the Jews' wailing-place. Passing through a gate into a garden, and going a short distance northwards along the west wall of the Haram, we climbed over a heap of rubbish, and descended some eight feet below the surface to a narrow shelf or ledge made by the south end of a cistern. A dozen candles were lighted, which merely served to make the inner darkness visible, and then adjusting the ladder, we stepped carefully down to the bottom of the cistern called el Burak, after the winged steed of Muhammed. This cistern is about seventy feet long from north to south, and the width is that of the span of the arch—forty-two feet. The arch springs from the foundation-wall of the Haram, as does also that of

Robinson's Arch, and the stones are similar to it in shape and size. It is semicircular and perfect, composed of twenty-five courses, or tiers, twelve on each side of the key-stone, and is, in a word, Robinson's Arch—rather, one similar to it completed—and the perfection of the work strikes the beholder with admiration and wonder. This arch is by far the most impressive specimen of Roman architecture yet discovered about Jerusalem. Major Wilson believes that there



WILSON'S ARCH.

never was more than one arch at that place, the remainder of the Tyropœon valley westwards having been filled up by a solid causeway; "but Captain Warren's excavations have since shown that there were a series of arches forming a viaduct which lead up towards the palace of Herod on the western hill." The object of the arch, Major Wilson supposed, was to furnish a passage under the causeway which led across the valley to the Temple area.

Dr. Barclay, who resided for years on the opposite side of the valley, and not far from this arch, seems actually to have penetrated to it, but, in the darkness, was led to believe that it was merely the vault of an ancient cistern, and, therefore, did not discover its true character and importance. Nor is this surprising, for it was only when illuminated by a magnesium light that we obtained an adequate idea of its dimensions. An inspection of it thus lit up showed that it was as old as the foundation-wall of the Haram area, since the lower tiers of the arch form part of that wall. It was probably built by Herod, and it is certainly the heaviest and most perfect specimen of the Roman arch I have yet seen. At what time it was converted into a cistern, by closing up the ends, is not known; but that work was also massive, and evidently not of modern origin.

From Robinson's Arch I passed out of the city through Bâb el Mughâribeh—Gate of the Moors, or western Africans—which is in the bed of the Tyropœon, a short distance farther south. It is a small entrance, without any pretensions to antiquity, and entirely destitute of architectural ornament. It is supposed to be the modern representative of the ancient Dung Gate referred to by Nehemiah.[1] From there I followed the course of the south wall, and looked at its three gates, now closed up. The Double Gate is directly below the Mosk of el Aksa; the Triple Gate is about midway between it and the south-east angle of the wall; and the Single Gate, farther on, has behind it the great vaults called Solomon's Stables, and may have been the entrance to them. The original purpose of these walled-up gates can only be conjectured.

Passing round the south-eastern corner of the wall, and looking with increased respect at the great stones marking the ancient portions of it, I spent a few moments in examining the graves which extend from there on towards the Golden Gate and beyond; but they did not interest me, and require no special description.[2]

That narrow space between the wall and the valley of the Kidron, directly opposite to the Jews' burial-place on the side of Olivet, is crowded with Moslem tombs, which formed an invincible obstacle to Captain Warren's attempts to explore the foundations of the eastern wall of the Haram area. He partially succeeded,

[1] Neh. iii. 13, 14; xii. 31.

[2] See illustration on page 504.

however, as you know, by driving a gallery beneath them, by which he reached the original foundation of the wall, and there discovered the marks of the Phœnician builders. If he had been allowed to excavate along the wall itself, many other revelations would, no doubt, have rewarded his labors at that most interesting locality.

Captain Warren, in giving the results which his explorations had suggested, says: "Herod's Temple enclosure appears, then, to have consisted of the old enclosure of King Solomon's Temple, the old palace, and a piece built in at the south-west angle to make the whole a square of about nine hundred feet a side. And, besides this, there was the portion on which the towers protecting the side of the Temple rested, called by Josephus the Exhedra, and connected with the main castle of Antonia by a double set of cloisters.

"The inference I draw from these walls is that the portion from Wilson's Arch to the Prophet's Gate is of the time of Solomon, being the west wall of his Temple enclosure, and that the portion from the Double Gate round by the south-east angle is also Solomonic, having formed the wall of his palace. The wall at the north-east angle I suppose to have been the work of the kings of Judah, the *old wall* to which Josephus[1] tells us the wall of Agrippa was joined."[2]

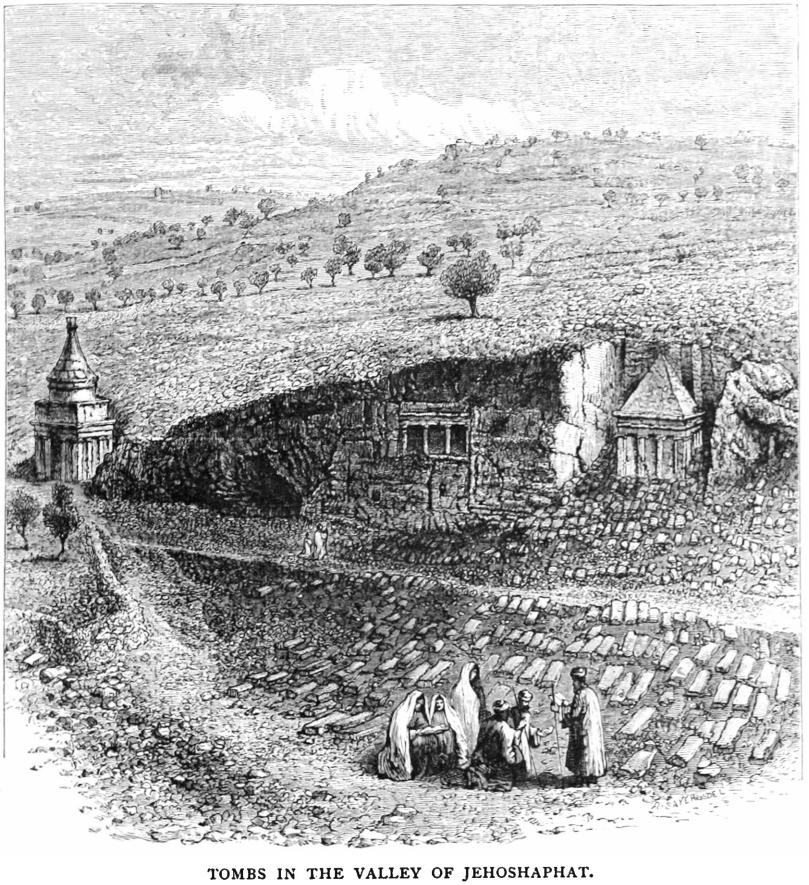
On my way back to the tents I crossed over to the east side of the Kidron, to the celebrated tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat, which deservedly attract the attention of all travellers.

They are in the steep rocky termination of that part of Olivet directly north of the village of Kefr Silwân, where the base of the mountain has been cut and hewn into perpendicular faces by Jerusalem's ancient quarriers. In these faces are sepulchres of the ordinary kind, but the tombs which merit special attention are, first, the monolith of Zechariah. It is a cubical block, about seventeen feet every way, surmounted by a flattened pyramid of at least twelve feet elevation, and the entire height is nearly thirty feet. It has no mason-work about it, but is one solid mass hewn out of the mountain, the adjacent rock being cut away, so that it stands entirely detached. Each of the sides has two columns and two demi-columns of the Ionic order, and the corners are finished off with

[1] B. J. v. iv. 2.

[2] Rec. of Jer. p. 252, 253.

square pilasters. The capitals are plain Ionic, and a broad cornice, worked with acanthus leaves, runs round the top below the pyramid. There is no known entrance. It derives its name, according to the Jews, by whom it is held in great veneration, from Zechariah the priest, mentioned in 2 Chronicles,[1] and referred to by



TOMBS IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.

Christ in his denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."[2]

[1] 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

[2] Matt. xxiii. 35.

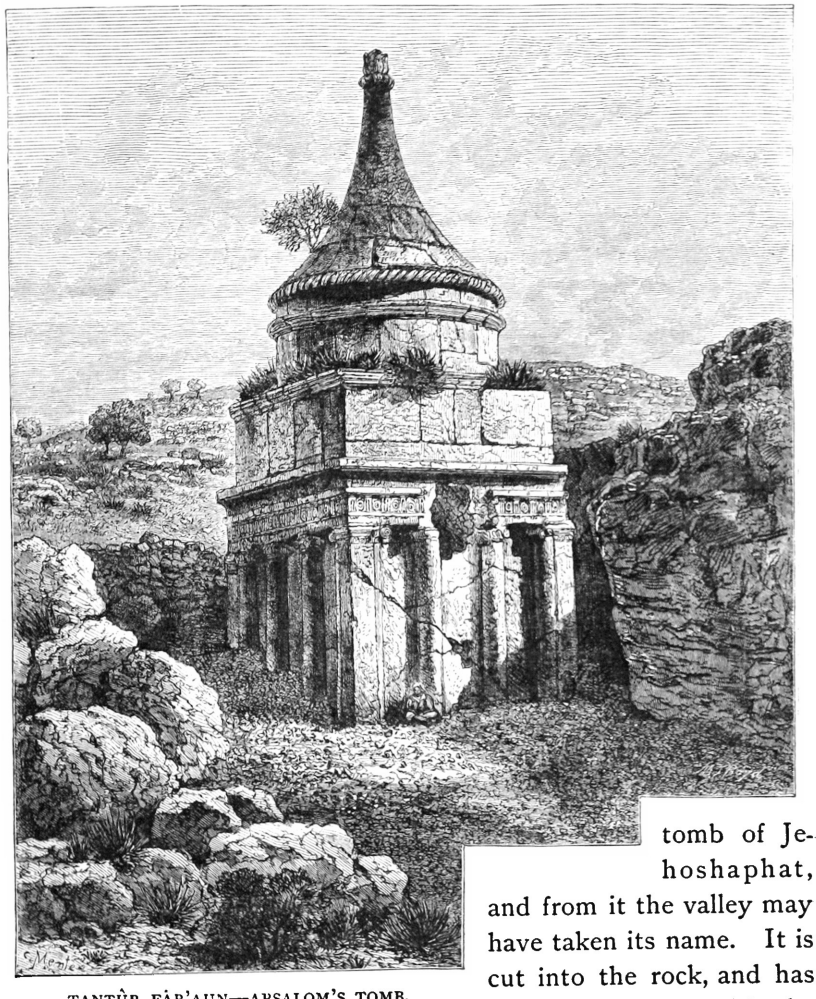
Second, the tomb of St. James, near to the north side of this monolith, and excavated in the solid rock. It has a porch eighteen feet by nine, and shows a fine front to the west, ornamented with two columns and two half columns of the Doric order. The entrance is not by these columns, but from a passage cut through the rock, in the north-east corner of the space around the tomb of Zechariah. The cave of St. James extends forty or fifty feet back into the mountain, and around it cluster many traditions concerning that apostle, of no value whatever. It is at times used as a sheepfold.

Some two hundred feet north of this is the tomb of Absalom. The lower part of this monument resembles that of Zechariah. The square is twenty-two feet on each side, and has a pilaster at each angle, and a quarter column attached to it, and also two half columns between these, having Ionic capitals, and sustaining an entablature of a singularly mixed character. Its frieze and architrave are Doric, and have triglyphs and guttæ. The metope is occupied by a circular disk or shield, but in lieu of the regular cornice there is one which resembles the Egyptian cornice, consisting of a deep and high corvetto, and a bold torus below it. Above this is a square attic rather more than seven feet in height. Upon this is a circular attic. The whole is finished off with what Dr. Robinson calls a small dome, running up into a low spire, which spreads a little at the top, like an opening flower. The square itself is of solid rock; the rest—the square and circular attics and the dome, to the top—are built of heavy stones. The entire height of this very striking tomb cannot be less than fifty feet, but the lower part is not a little encumbered with stones and rubbish. It is called Absalom's tomb from its supposed identity with the pillar mentioned in 2 Samuel: "Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place."[1] Believing it to be Absalom's tomb, the Jews and natives throw stones against it and spit at it as they pass by. This tomb has been much broken on the north side, and an opening made into a sepulchral chamber within the solid part of it, probably in search

[1] 2 Sam. xviii. 18.

of hid treasure. A small bush, now seen growing out of the dome, may ultimately become a striking feature of the monument.

Close to the pillar of Absalom, on the north-east, is the reputed



TANTÛR FÂR'AUN—ABSALOM'S TOMB.

tomb of Jehoshaphat, and from it the valley may have taken its name. It is cut into the rock, and has an ornamental portal in the perpendicular face of the stone; but the sepulchre is wholly subterranean, and in no way remarkable.

I examined these monuments with special pleasure and interest, not because they really had any connection with the individuals

whose names they bear, but because they remain, I suppose, very much as they were at the time of our Saviour. I know not whether there is a single edifice, or part of one, in Jerusalem, upon which his eye of compassion rested, when from Olivet he beheld the city and wept over it; but those sepulchral monuments appear now much as they did then to him, and he must have often seen and spoken of them.

The entire face of Olivet above those tombs is crowded with the graves of the Jews, each one covered by a rough limestone slab, and many bearing brief inscriptions in Hebrew. They are quite plain, and destitute of emblem or symbol; but the lesson suggested by their utter dreariness is sad and affecting.

While watching the Jews — men, women, and children — who came to weep and to pray over the ruins of their Sanctuary, and the dispersion of their nation, a train of reflection somewhat in sympathy with their circumstances occurred to me.

To account for those venerable foundations — where they are, what they are, and what they imply — we must transport ourselves, by a supreme effort, nineteen hundred years back, to the time of Herod the Great. But he did not originate the Temple nor its service. He merely restored to the Jews that built by Nehemiah; and this requires another retrogression of six hundred years. But Nehemiah only reconstructed the Temple erected by Solomon, to reach whose day and generation another backward step of five centuries is again necessary. To account for the erection of the first Temple by Solomon himself the previous existence of the Tabernacle must be borne in mind, and that carries us farther back five hundred years, to the time of Moses and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. Again, the presence of the Hebrew nation at Sinai implies the bondage in Egypt, and that refers to the previous history of the patriarchs, and they to the age of Abraham.

Thus those massive and time-worn foundations lead us, by a chain of great links, from the current hour to the Father of the Faithful himself, and the inauguration of God's visible kingdom on earth. These links bind together the whole Bible history; nor can the chain be broken. It is impossible to account for one of the links without admitting the rest in the chain. Those weather-

beaten stones, therefore, are witnesses, silent, solemn, and unimpeachable, to the great historic facts upon which our faith depends, and on which it has its foundations. There they stand, questioned and cross-questioned by friend and foe; but who can overthrow their testimony? In respect of these there is no other spot so interesting and important to Jew and Gentile as this Temple Mount, and the old foundation-stones of the Holy Sanctuary now found upon it.

You should not stop with the visible and the material. To reach their true significance they must be glorified by a spiritual transfiguration. This mount is symbolic; the Temple is typical. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," said Jesus to the captious Jews; "but he spake of the temple of his body."[1] He is the true Temple; or, to vary the figure, he is the true Foundation-stone of the corner upon which the whole spiritual edifice is erected. Herein is the true import and importance of this entire series of material things. Apart from this typical significance, those old foundations have no special value for the world of mankind over any other ancient walls.

Isaiah, in prophetic vision, understood this, and proclaimed it to the people in his day: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste," or be confounded.[2] In the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm it is written, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."[3] Our Lord quotes this passage, and applies it to himself;[4] and "Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, this is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."[5]

Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints,

[1] John ii. 19–21. [2] Isa. xxviii. 16. [3] Psa. cxviii. 22, 23.
[4] Matt. xxi. 42–44; Mark xii. 10, 11; Luke xx. 17, 18. [5] Acts iv. 8, 11, 12.

and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."[1] And the Apostle Peter, addressing the Church universal, further expands and spiritualizes the same Scripture.[2]

There can be no mistake, therefore, in associating those venerable foundations of the material Temple, which the providence of God has preserved for us to see and reverently study, with that high spiritual import culminating in the Saviour himself.

[1] Eph. ii. 19–22.

[2] 1 Pet. ii. 4–8.

XVII.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

The Jaffa Gate.—Tower of David.—Major Wilson's Description of the Tower.—Hippicus.—Phasaëlus.—Kŭl'at el Jâlûd.—Josephus's Description of Phasaëlus and Hippicus.—Kŭl'at el Jâlûd, Psephinus.—Artificial Foundations of the Turkish Barracks and the English Church.—Armenian Convent.—Church of St. James.—Zion Gate.—Village of the Lepers.—Lepers and Leprosy.—Regulations of Moses regarding Leprosy.—Account of Leprosy amongst the Jews given by Tacitus.—Obscure Nature of Leprosy.—Naaman the Syrian.—Action of Leprosy on the Human Body.—Moral Significance of Leprosy.—Healing of the Ten Lepers by Jesus.—House of Caiaphas.—Tomb of David.—The Cœnaculum.—The Sop.—Ancient Chapel near the Tomb of David.—Miss Barclay's Description of the Tomb of David.—Biblical and Historical References to the Tomb of David.—Plunder of the Tomb by Hyrcanus and Herod the Great.—Mount Zion.—Cemeteries on Zion.—Ananias and Sapphira.—Custom of Burial immediately after Death.—Large Size of Rock-cut Tombs at Jerusalem.—Jews' Quarter.—Synagogues.—The Jews in Jerusalem.—Pool of Hezekiah.—Shops and Streets.—Manufacture of Relics and Trinkets.—Saracenic Fountains.—The Cotton Grotto.—Grotto of Jeremiah.—The Damascus Gate.—Captain Warren's Excavations at the Damascus Gate.—St. Stephen's Gate.—Martyrdom of Stephen.—The Mount of Olives and Road to Bethany.—Population of Modern Jerusalem.—Population of Ancient Jerusalem.—Jerusalem during the Great Feasts.—Early History of Jerusalem.—Melchizedęk, Salem, Shem.—Incidents in the History of Jerusalem.—El Kuds, the Holy.

May 1st. Evening.

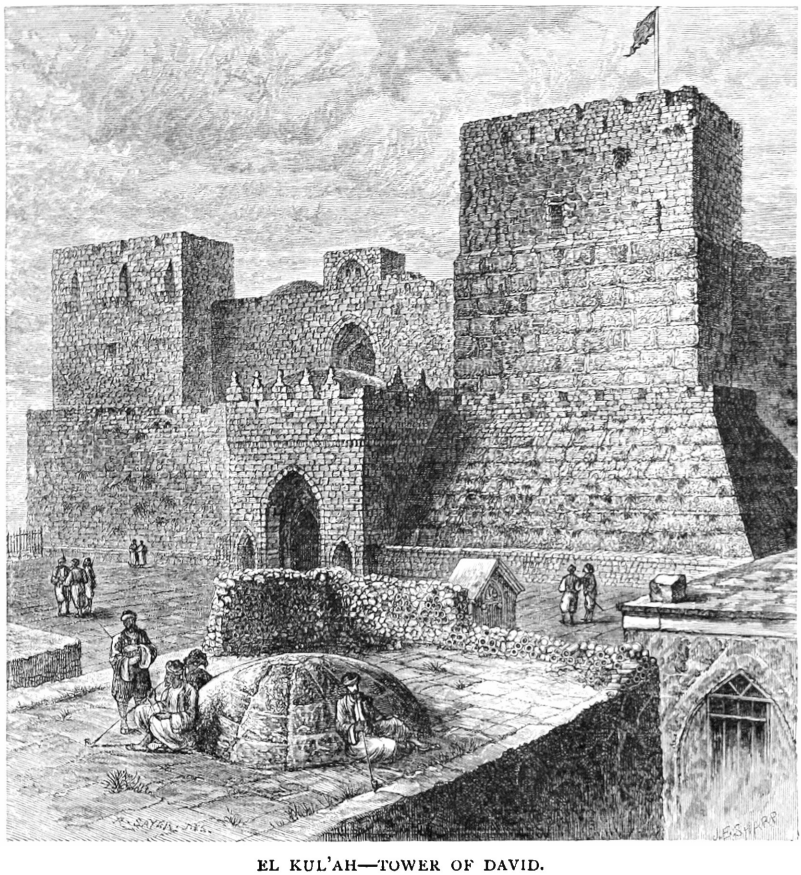
MOST of this morning was devoted to Zion, both that part within the walls and the southern portion now outside of them. The rest of the day I spent in visiting localities in and around the city. I longed to penetrate the mysteries of the so-called Tower of David, near the Jaffa Gate; but, without a permit from the governor, strangers are not admitted.

The Jaffa Gate is called Bâb el Khŭlîl—the Gate of Hebron—because the road to that place leads out of it. Its position is well chosen, being directly below the citadel, the only castle of Jerusalem.

The Tower of David, the only one now remaining of the three towers left standing by command of Titus when he destroyed the city, is the most conspicuous object within the citadel. It is seen to greatest advantage as one enters the city through the Jaffa Gate, and then turns to the right, passing directly in front of the entrance to the castle. That fortress is surrounded by a deep moat, and is entered over an arched bridge which spans the fosse on its eastern side; but the entrance to the Tower of David is through the modern part, about half-way up, and on its western side, within the citadel. Major Wilson says that "the so-called Tower of David appears to be the oldest portions of the citadel. It has a sloping escarp of masonry, above which the tower rises to the height of twenty-nine feet. The escarp is faced with large stones, and retains to some extent its original appearance; but time and hard treatment have worn away much of the finer work, and the repairs have been executed in a very slovenly manner. Where the original workmanship can be seen, it is quite equal, if not superior, to that of the Wailing-place [of the Jews], the faces of the stones being finely chiselled, and having a shallow draught run round their margins. The whole, when perfect, must have presented a smooth surface, difficult to escalade, and, from the solidity of the mass, unassailable by the battering-ram."

The tower rises from the fosse, protected on the sides below by the sloping escarp, to a height of over forty feet, and this antique portion is apparently solid throughout; then comes the modern addition, rising to about thirty feet. The lower part is built of large bevelled stones, averaging ten and a half feet in length, four and a half feet in breadth, by about the same in height. I have been within the citadel, and examined the portions of the tower that are now accessible, but found nothing which could cast any further light upon its history. It is commonly supposed to occupy the site of the Tower of Hippicus, mentioned by Josephus, and to this it owes its chief importance, since Josephus makes that tower the point of departure in laying down the lines of the walls of Jerusalem.

The measurements of the Tower of David certainly do not correspond with those of the Hippicus, as given by Josephus. He



EL KUL'AH—TOWER OF DAVID.

says: "Hippicus, so named from his [Herod's] friend, was square; its length and breadth were each twenty-five cubits, and its height thirty, and it had no vacuity in it." This latter fact agrees well with the lower part of the Tower of David, which, as already remarked, has "no vacuity in it." But the size does not correspond, for twenty-five cubits make thirty-seven and a half feet; while the present Tower of David is fifty-six feet on the eastern and seventy feet on the southern side, which gives a superficial area three times larger than that of Hippicus—a difference so great as to render very doubtful its identity with the Tower of David.

Mr. Fergusson, however, maintains that this is the Tower of Pha-

saëlus, and that the site of Hippicus is to be found at the extreme north-west corner of the present city walls, where are the remains of a tower called Kŭl'at el Jâlûd—the Castle of Goliath.

The dimensions of Phasaëlus, forty cubits square, agree much better with those of the Tower of David. Forty cubits are equal to sixty feet, and the square of this is three thousand six hundred feet, which agrees closely enough with the superficies of the present tower—three thousand nine hundred and twenty feet—but not with the area of the Hippicus of Josephus. I am inclined, therefore, to accept the theory that identifies Phasaëlus with the Tower of David; but whether the Hippicus be at Kŭl'at el Jâlûd, or adjoining the Tower of David, and nearer the Jaffa Gate, are questions yet to be decided.

All we know about these towers is gathered from Josephus, and if you turn to the fifth book of his Jewish Wars, at the fourth chapter, you will find a magnificent description of them. According to him the lower part of Phasaëlus was sixty feet high. Above this was a cloister fifteen feet high, and over this cloister a tower, parted into magnificent rooms, and a place for bathing. Its entire altitude was about one hundred and thirty-five feet, which was fifteen feet higher than the Hippicus. His statement that over the solid part of the Hippicus, which was forty-five feet high, there was a reservoir thirty feet deep, is simply incredible. But there may be some error in the text. Indeed, the entire account of these structures must be regarded as daring exaggeration on the part of Josephus. Beginning with the assertion that "for largeness, beauty, and strength these towers were beyond all that were in the habitable earth," he proceeds to prove his assertion by assigning to them dimensions manifestly extravagant.

If I should venture to locate another of his towers, I would identify Kŭl'at el Jâlûd with Psephinus. Josephus says that it was "at the north-west corner [of the city wall], and, being seventy cubits high, it doth afford a prospect of Arabia, at sunrising, as well as it did of the utmost limits of the Hebrew possessions at the sea westwards." No other position about Jerusalem commands such a vast outlook; and if Psephinus stood upon the elevated site of Kŭl'at el Jâlûd, this statement of Josephus may have been literally true.

South of the Tower of David are extensive barracks erected by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt, in 1833 and 1834, and his architect told me that he had dug through sixty-eight feet of rubbish, hoping to reach the solid rock, but was finally obliged to build upon artificial foundations. The same result was made apparent by the excavations for a foundation upon which to erect the English church, which is directly east of the tower. I remember the dismay of the architect, Mr. J. W. Johns, at the enormous expense necessary to obtain a suitable foundation for that edifice. He was obliged to sink his shafts thirty-nine feet below the surface before he reached the rock, and the cubical contents of the foundations amounted to seventy thousand feet of masonry. All this shows that there was originally a deep ravine in that part of Zion, descending westwards into the valley of Gihon.

From the Tower of David I went directly south, along the level street that leads to the Gate of Zion. This is the cleanest and most agreeable street in Jerusalem, having the Armenian convent, the Church of St. James, and their extensive quarters for pilgrims on the east side, and attractive gardens and pleasant shade-trees on the west.

The Armenian community in Jerusalem, though not large, is reputed to be wealthy, and their church is, next to the Holy Sepulchre, the largest in the city. It occupies the traditional site of the martyrdom of St. James, and is rich in ecclesiastical decorations and sacred vestments, but its pictures are of no great value. The number of pilgrims sheltered and provided for in the spacious convent is very great, and altogether theirs is the pleasantest quarter within the walls of the city.

Zion Gate, known by the name of Bâb en Neby Dâûd—Gate of the Prophet David—is perfectly plain, and has no other importance, apparently, but to afford an outlet to that part of Zion which lies without the walls.

To the east of the gate, and just before passing out of the city, there formerly existed a row of hovels called the Village of the Lepers. Arranged along the wall for a short distance from the gate, those hovels presented a most squalid and disgusting appearance. A hospital has been recently provided for lepers, outside the

Jaffa Gate, near the upper pool of Gihon. One meets these unfortunate creatures in every part of the country, but it was only at their village here in Jerusalem that the horrors of their hopeless condition were fully exposed.



VILLAGE OF THE LEPERS.

I was both surprised and startled, on approaching the Holy City in 1833, by the sudden apparition of a crowd of beggars, "sans eyes, sans nose, sans hair, sans everything." Having never seen a leper, or had my attention turned to the subject—for half a century ago Jerusalem and its marvels were not so well understood as they are now—I at first knew not what to make of them. They held up

towards me their handless arms, unearthly sounds gurgled through throats without palates—in a word, I was horrified. I subsequently visited their habitations, and made many inquiries into their history. It appears that those unfortunate beings have been perpetuated about Jerusalem from the remotest antiquity. One of my first thoughts, on visiting their dens of corruption and death, was that the government should separate them, and thus in a few years extinguish the race and the plague together; and I still think that a wise, steady, and vigilant sanitary system might eventually eradicate this fearful malady. But it cannot be so easily or expeditiously accomplished as I then thought. It is not confined to Jerusalem, for I have met with it in different and distant parts of the country. And what is particularly discouraging is that fresh cases appear from time to time, in which the leprosy seems to arise spontaneously, without hereditary or any other possible connection with those previously diseased.

It is evident that Moses, in his very stringent regulations respecting this plague and its unhappy victims, had in view its extinction, or at least restriction within the narrowest possible limits. Those who were merely suspected were shut up; and if the disease declared itself, the individual was immediately removed out of the camp, and not only he, but everything he touched, was declared unclean. For all practical purposes the same laws prevail to this day. The lepers, when not obliged to live outside the city, have a separate abode assigned to them, and are shunned as unclean and dangerous. No one will touch them, eat with them, or use any of their clothes or utensils, and with good reason. The leper was required by Moses to stand apart, and give warning by crying unclean! unclean! Thus the ten men that met our Saviour stood afar off, and lifted up their voice of entreaty.[1] They still do the same substantially, and, even in their begging, never attempt to touch you. Amongst tent-dwelling Arabs the leper is literally put out of the camp.

Tacitus has some strange stories about the leprosy and the Jews. When he comes to speak of the Jewish war in the time of Vespasian, he takes occasion to give an account of the origin of

[1] Luke xvii. 12, 13.

that people, in which there are almost as many fables as sentences. He then goes on to say that "one thing is certain. The Jews, when in Egypt, were all afflicted with leprosy, and from them it spread to the Egyptians. When the king, Bochorus, inquired of Jupiter Ammon how his kingdom could be freed from this calamity, he was informed that it could be effected only by expelling the whole multitude of the Jews, as they were a race detested by the gods. He accordingly drove them all forth into the desert, where one Moses met them, and succeeded in bringing them all into obedience to himself," with a great deal more of such nonsense. He accounts for the rejection of swine's flesh amongst the Jews by the fable that the leprosy was caught from swine.[1] This much, I think, can be safely inferred from a careful study of the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Leviticus, that the Hebrews were actually afflicted with the awful curse of leprosy beyond all modern example —leprosy of many kinds: in their persons; leprosy in garments—in the warp and in the woof—leprosy in the skins of animals; leprosy in the mortar, and even in the stones of their houses. It is probable that some obscure traditions of these things, which were afloat in the world, furnished the materials out of which the fancy of the historian worked up his malignant libel on the Hebrew nation.

Have you any explanation of this very obscure disease, and especially in reference to leprosy in garments and walls of houses?

For many years I have sought in every possible way to get at the mystery, but neither learned critics nor physicians, foreign or native, nor books, ancient or modern, have thrown any light upon it. I have suspected that this disease, which, like the anthropophagous ghouls of the Arabs, leisurely eats up its victims in one long remorseless meal, is, or is caused by, living and self-propagating animalculæ; and thus I can conceive it possible that those animalculæ might fasten on a wall, especially if the cement were mixed with sizing, as is now done, or other gelatinous or animal glues. Still, the most cursory reference to the best of our recent medical works suffices to show how little is known about the whole subject of contagion, and its propagation by fomites. One finds in them abundant and incontestable instances of the propa-

[1] Tacitus, Ann., book v.

gation of many terrible constitutional maladies, in the most inexplicable manner, by garments, leather, wood, and other things, the "materies morbi" meantime eluding the most persevering and vigilant search, aided by every appliance of modern science, chemical or optical. This much, however, about leprosy is certain, that there are different kinds of it, and that fresh cases are constantly occurring in this country. What originates it, and how it is propagated, are points enveloped in profound darkness.

But, though we cannot comprehend the leprosy or cleanse the leper, there are many things to be learned from this mysterious disease. It has ever been regarded as a direct punishment from God, and absolutely incurable, except by the same divine power that sent it. God alone could cure the leprosy. It was so understood by Naaman the Syrian, who came from Damascus to Samaria to be cured by Elisha; and this is implied in the strong protestation of the King of Israel when Naaman was sent to him: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?"[1] And when Naaman's flesh came again as the flesh of a little child, he said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."[2] It is a curious fact that this hideous disease still cleaves to Damascus, the city of Naaman, for there is a variety of it there which is sometimes cured, or apparently cured, even at this day. I have met with cases, however, where the cure was only temporary, and perhaps it is so in every instance.

There is nothing in the entire range of human phenomena which illustrates so impressively the divine power of the Redeemer, and the nature and extent of his work of mercy on man's behalf, as this leprosy. There are many most striking analogies between it and that more deadly leprosy of sin which has involved our whole race in one common ruin. It is feared as contagious; it is certainly and inevitably hereditary; it is loathsome and polluting; its victim is shunned by all as unclean; it is most deceitful in its action. New-born children of leprous parents are often as pretty and as healthy in appearance as any others; but by-and-by its presence and workings become visible in some of the signs described in the

[1] 2 Kings v. 7. [2] 2 Kings v. 14, 15.

thirteenth chapter of Leviticus. The "scab" comes on by degrees in different parts of the body; the hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay, and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up, and slowly fall away; the gums are absorbed, and the teeth disappear; the nose, the eyes, the tongue, and the palate are slowly consumed, and finally the wretched victim sinks into the earth and disappears, while medicine has no power to stay the ravages of this fell disease, or even to mitigate sensibly its tortures.

Who can fail to find in all this a most affecting type of man's moral leprosy? Like it, this too is hereditary, and with infallible certainty. As surely as we have inherited it from our fathers do we transmit it to our children. None escape. The infant, so lively, with its cherub smile and innocent prattle, has imbibed the fatal poison. There are those, I know, who, as they gaze on the soft, clear heaven of infancy's laughing eye, reject with horror the thought that even here the leprosy of sin lies deep within. So any one might think and say who looked upon a beautiful babe in the arms of its leprous mother. But, alas! give but time enough, and the physical malady manifests its presence, and does its work of death. And so in the antitype. If left unchecked by power divine, the leprosy of sin will eat into the very texture of the soul, and consume everything lovely and pure in human character, until the smiling babe becomes the traitor Iscariot, a Nero, a Cæsar Borgia, or a bloody Robespierre. These were all once smiling babes.

Again, leprosy of the body none but God can cure. So, also, there is only one Physician in the universe who can cleanse the soul from the leprosy of sin. Medicines of man's device are of no avail, but with Him none are needed. He said to the ten lepers, who stood afar off, and lifted up their voices and cried, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us, Go shew yourselves unto the priests; and as they went they were cleansed."[1] And with the same divine power He says to many a moral leper, "Go in peace, thy sins be forgiven thee;" and it happens unto them according to their faith. To my mind, there is no conceivable manifestation of divine power more triumphantly confirmatory of Christ's divinity than the cleans-

[1] Luke xvii. 13, 14.

ing of a leper with a word. When looking at those handless, eyeless, tongueless wrecks of humanity, the unbelieving question starts unbidden, Is it possible that they can be restored? Yes, it is more than possible. It has been accomplished once and again by the mere volition of Him who spake, and it was done. And He who can cleanse the leper can raise the dead, and can also forgive sins and save the soul. I ask for no other evidence of the fact.

The first building that attracts attention outside of Zion Gate is the so-called House of Caiaphas, now an Armenian convent. Besides the tombs of the Armenian patriarchs of Jerusalem, and the prison of Christ, it has a small church, which, I was informed, is enriched with various choice relics.

Yes; they claim to have the identical stone which closed the door of the Sepulchre, and which was rolled away by the angels on the morning of the Resurrection. They also show the stone upon which the cock stood when he crowed three times before Peter completed that miserable denial of his Lord. You may lay these up with the myth of the thicket in which the ram was caught by the horns, and substituted on the altar instead of Isaac by the Father of the Faithful.

The only other place of note on that part of Zion is the Tomb of David, now a large irregularly built mosk, having several small domes and a single minaret. Of course it belongs to the Muhammedans, and is called by them Neby Dâûd—the Prophet David.

In the midst of this group of buildings is the Cœnaculum, a dreary "upper room," fifty or sixty feet long by some thirty in width. An ancient tradition says that our Lord here celebrated his last Passover, and at the close of it instituted the Supper, as recorded in the Gospels of Luke and John.[1] Whether there is any historic foundation for this, or for the equally old tradition that this was the place where the Apostles were assembled on the day of Pentecost, when the miracle of the cloven tongues of fire occurred, I will not inquire.

Could we be reasonably sure that somewhere within that confused group of Saracenic buildings our Lord did in very deed spend that last night with his sorrowing disciples; that he there

[1] Luke xxii. 7–30; John xiii. 1–17.

partook of his last Passover; there instituted the Eucharistic Supper; there girded himself with a napkin, and washed the feet of the perplexed and unwilling disciples; that there he gave the mysterious "sop" to Judas; that from the "upper room" the sad company traversed the dark streets of Jerusalem from end to end until they descended into the deep vale of the Kidron, and retired into the secluded Garden of Gethsemane—if, I say, we could really believe all this, no locality within the Holy City would be invested with more tender and solemn interest than the Cœnaculum, close to the so-called Tomb of David.

All that is evident enough; but it is well, however, that the tradition has no historic basis, else the place would long since have been profaned by the grossest idolatry. The recorded incidents that took place on that occasion suggest many affecting topics for inquiry and meditation, and in the presence of even a fictitious site, claiming to localize them, one is strongly tempted to moralize.

Leaving for the present other and more sacred themes, let me ask whether there is any custom still prevalent in this country which can illustrate the true significance of the "sop" that was given to Judas.[1] Are we to suppose, as some do, that Jesus intended it as an indication of kindness on his part? Was it, so to speak, heaping coals of fire on the traitor's head?—a last effort of superhuman love and compassion to melt his stony heart—saying, in language intelligible to him alone, "Though I know your cruel covenant with the Chief Priests, yet the way is still open for repentance?"

This is certainly possible, for He who accepted the penitent thief would not have rejected a sincerely repenting disciple. But to answer your special inquiry, one needs to know whether the customs amongst the Jews at that time were, in such matters, similar to those still prevalent amongst the Arabs, and had the same signification. It is with them a mark of special respect for the master of a feast to hand or send to a guest portions of what is before him, or to insist on putting morsels or sops into his mouth with his own hand. I have had this done to me when the intention was certainly to honor and manifest good-will, and such, apparently,

[1] John xiii. 21–30.

was the significance of similar acts in ancient times. Joseph sent messes to his brethren; a mess of meat from David's table followed Uriah to his house. Nor can I recall an instance in Biblical history where such an act had any other meaning than that of hospitality, friendship, or respect.

How, then, do you understand the fact that, as soon as Judas received the sop, Satan entered into him?

Kindness from one we have injured, or whom we intended to injure, will either subdue our enmity and win us from our evil purpose, or it will harden the heart and intensify hatred. In this latter way the sop acted upon Judas, and elicited the remark of our Lord, "That thou doest, do quickly." Love could not conquer; therefore it drove him to desperation and madness. Into such a heart Satan would be a welcome guest. No wonder, therefore, that Judas went out immediately. The position became intolerable, and he hurried away to guide the soldiers to the Garden, where he knew that Jesus would ere long be found with the other disciples.

There was an old chapel somewhere in the vicinity of the present tomb and mosk as early as the fourth century, designed to commemorate those solemn events attending the Last Supper, and it is a pleasant thought to suppose that there may be some truth in a tradition almost as old as Christendom itself. It is a matter of regret, however, that the reputed Tomb of David and the Cœnaculum should be in the hands of the Muhammedans. No Christian is permitted to enter the former, and it is guarded with greater jealousy even than el Haram esh Sherîf.

The daughter of Dr. Barclay, however, while residing with her father in Jerusalem, had the rare fortune to be secretly introduced into the Tomb of David by a Moslem lady, and she thus describes it:

"The room is insignificant in its dimensions, but is furnished very gorgeously. The tomb is apparently an immense sarcophagus of rough stone, and is covered by green satin tapestry, richly embroidered with gold. To this a piece of black velvet is attached, with a few inscriptions from the Koran, embroidered also in gold. A satin canopy of red, blue, green, and yellow stripes hangs over the tomb; and another piece of black velvet tapestry, embroidered

in silver, covers a door in one end of the room, which, they said, leads to a cave underneath. Two tall candlesticks stand before this door, and a little lamp hangs in a window near it, which is kept constantly burning, and whose wick, though saturated with olive oil —and I dare say a most nauseous dose—my devotional companion eagerly swallowed, muttering to herself a prayer, with many genuflections. She then, in addition to their usual forms of prayer, prostrated herself before the tomb, raising the covering, pressing her forehead to the stone, and then kissing it many times.

"The ceiling of the room is vaulted, and the walls covered with blue porcelain in floral figures. Having remained here an hour, and completed my sketch, we left; and great was my rejoicing when I found myself once more at home, out of danger, and, still better, out of my awkward costume."

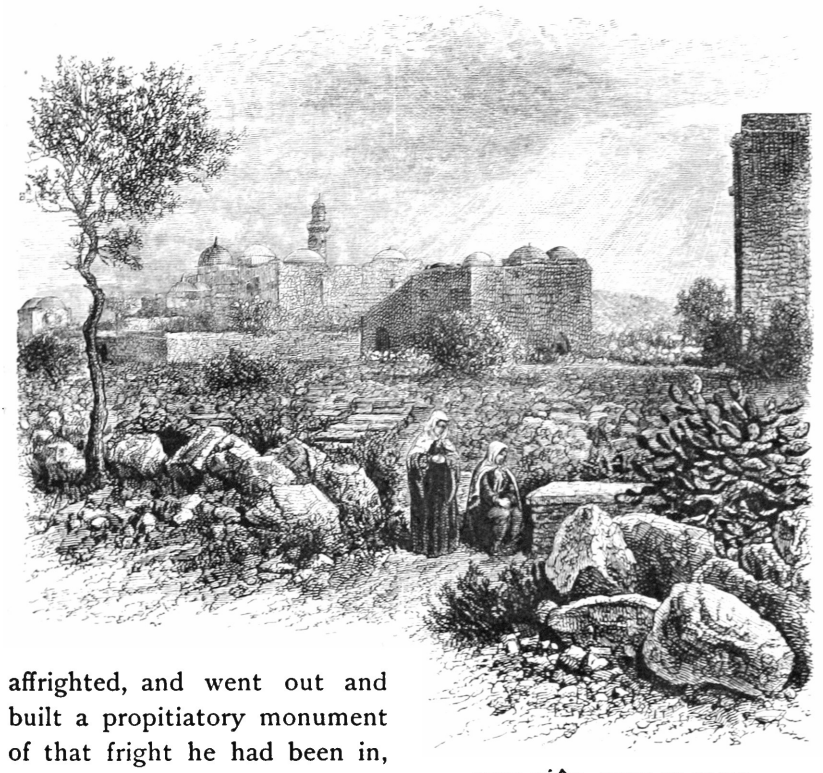
Personally acquainted with the writer, I have entire confidence in her statement; but whether what she saw was the veritable tomb of David is quite another matter. It is possible, however, that the large group of buildings may mark the spot where David was buried. His sepulchre appears to have been well known at the time of Christ, for Peter appeals to this fact in his speech on the day of Pentecost—"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."[1]

An additional confirmation is furnished by the fact that this site was known and venerated in the early part of the fourth century, and has never been lost sight of since. A part of the present buildings was originally a church, and, in times comparatively recent, another portion was occupied as a convent by Franciscan monks; but for the last three or four centuries the entire group of edifices has been in the hands of fanatical Moslems, and will so remain, I suppose, until the coming overthrow of the Turkish Empire.

Josephus, in his Antiquities, tells some strange stories about the robbing of this sepulchre, first by Hyrcanus the high-priest, who took out of it three thousand talents with which to bribe Antiochus to abandon the siege of Jerusalem; and afterwards by Herod the Great, who made the attempt, hoping to find an immense store

[1] Acts ii. 29.

of money, but was disappointed. Both these accounts seem rather apocryphal, and the story of Herod's attempt is so embellished with miraculous incidents as to be quite incredible. Herod sought to penetrate "even as far as the very bodies of David and Solomon, when two of his guards were slain by a flame that burst out upon those who went in, as the report was; so he was terribly affrighted, and went out and built a propitiatory monument of that fright he had been in, and this of white stone, at the mouth of the sepulchre."[1]



NEBY DÂÛD—TOMB OF DAVID.

If the present Tomb of David is the place where these Biblical and historic incidents are said to have occurred, the interest attached to the site would be vastly increased, and they would corroborate the tradition that David and Solomon were buried there.

From the Tomb of David I passed on through fields of ripe

[1] Ant. B. xiii. viii. 4; B. xvi. vii. 1.

grain, and sat down under a venerable fig-tree, having all around me sights and scenes eminently Biblical and suggestive. The general surface of Mount Zion descends steeply eastwards into the Tyropœon and Kidron, and southwards into the valley of Hinnom. The whole of the hill here is under cultivation, and presents a most literal fulfilment of Micah's prophecy, "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field."[1] It occurred to me that this fact justifies the application of the name Zion to that part of Jerusalem, even though it could be proved that there was a site somewhere else also called Zion; for that is the only portion of the general area of the Holy City that is now, or ever has been, ploughed, so far as I can discover.

I traced, as far as visible, the line of the aqueduct that conveyed the water from the pools of Solomon to the Temple area. According to Major Wilson, Captain Warren, and others, there appears to have been a higher and lower aqueduct; but there are now no indications of the former above the surface in the immediate vicinity of the city.

My rambles led me to the premises of Bishop Gobat's schools, which are situated on the extreme south-west corner of the hill. Directly east of them are the English and German burial-grounds. The southern part of Zion is largely devoted to the cemeteries of the Armenian, Greek, and Latin communities; and between them is that of the Americans, a plot of ground about one hundred feet square, surrounded by a high wall, and directly north of the tomb of David.

A small funeral company attracted my attention in the Armenian cemetery. The body of a man was carried out of Zion Gate upon a plain bier, without a coffin, wrapped up merely in the coarse loose garments which he had worn when alive. I was informed that the deceased was a poor pilgrim, and that he had been dead only a very short time. This sad sight brought to my mind the account of the death and burial of Ananias and Sapphira, mentioned in Acts, and I determined to ask whether there was anything in the funeral customs of this country at the present day that throws light and relief upon that affecting narrative.

[1] Mic. iii. 12.

As to the burial of Ananias and Sapphira so soon after death, there was probably nothing in it contrary to the customs prevalent in Jerusalem at that time. Amongst modern Jews burial must take place, if possible, within twenty-four hours of death. The Muhammedans bury their dead the same day, if death takes place in the morning; but if it happens in the afternoon or during the night, the deceased is not buried until the following day. And this custom prevails even amongst the Christian sects. Such sights as the one you witnessed are common in all Oriental countries, especially in those cities to which pilgrims resort from a distance. Burckhardt thus describes the burial of a Moslem pilgrim in Mecca:

"Myself and a Greek hadjy, whom accident had brought to the spot, once closed the eyes of a poor Mogrebyn pilgrim, who had crawled into the neighborhood of the Kaaba, to breathe his last, as the Moslems say, 'in the arms of the prophet and of the guardian angels.' He intimated, by signs, his wish that we should sprinkle Zemzem water over him; and while we were doing so he expired; half an hour afterwards he was buried;" and "for a month subsequent to the conclusion of the Hadj"—the annual Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca—Burckhardt "found, almost every morning, corpses of pilgrims lying in the mosk," awaiting immediate burial.

Jerusalem has been for thousands of years the centre of vast pilgrimages, much like those to Mecca, and similar scenes must have often occurred here. Ananias and Sapphira were probably strangers, like "Barnabas of Cyprus," who, "having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet."[1] They may have come hither to keep the Hebrew feasts; and "the young men" who carried them forth were in all probability the regular undertakers appointed for such service. However that may be, the interment was not more sudden than that of the poor Mughrabeh at the K'abeh.

Still, accustomed as we are to delay burial for some days, the haste in their case seems almost heartless.

Were we acquainted with all the circumstances, it would doubtless appear that there had been no violation of propriety in the act. The bodies may not then have been put into the ground at all,

[1] Acts iv. 36, 37.

but merely carried forth and placed temporarily in one of the many rock-cut tombs about Jerusalem. In that there would have been nothing revolting to the most sensitive nature, and relatives or friends, if there had been any, could subsequently bestow upon them all the customary funeral rites. The supposition that they may have been thus disposed of for the moment is rendered the more credible from the fact that the body of Jesus had been but recently placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, with the same object in view. The loving Marys did actually hasten to his sepulchre on Sunday morning, "the first day of the week, bringing the spices which they had prepared" to embalm the body of Jesus, and to perform all the customary and appropriate rites.[1]

Had it been stated in the fifth chapter of Acts that something of this nature was intended in the case of Ananias and Sapphira his wife, every appearance of impropriety would have been avoided.

But, in the absence of verbal explanation, we have at least the rock-cut tombs to show the practicability of such action, and a recorded and impressive example of its actual performance near this very city, and only a short time before.

This theory relieves the proceeding of another feature which seems to require explanation. According to the narrative, Ananias was buried without even the knowledge of his wife. On the supposition that the interment of the husband was a final burial in the ground, I can think of no reason which would relieve that act of an appearance of unseemly and even cruel haste. But the whole difficulty vanishes on the assumption that his body was decently laid in some secure place, to be properly disposed of afterwards.

This seems quite satisfactory; but there remains the strange circumstance that the wife did not hear of the death of her husband for several hours—was not informed of it, in fact, until she entered the place where Peter was teaching, and was questioned by him.

Why she did not come with her husband we are not informed; but Jerusalem was then full of strangers from all parts of the world—"Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,"

[1] Luke xxiii. 50–56; xxiv. 1.

and from Egypt, Rome, and Arabia, and many other countries, as stated in the second chapter of Acts. It might easily happen, therefore, that individuals should become separated from their friends, and, for a time, lost in the surging crowds. An incident recorded in the history of our Lord may illustrate this: You remember that Joseph and Mary travelled a whole day on their way home without being aware that Jesus, then only twelve years old, had been left behind, and that, on their turning back to find him, they sought for him three days in Jerusalem. This was owing to the vast number of persons who had come up to the feast.[1] Now, that city was equally crowded at the time we are considering, and it was also an occasion of extraordinary excitement. It is not strange, therefore, that Sapphira should have been separated for awhile from her husband. The mere fact of a death or a funeral would attract very little attention; and, under such circumstances, there is nothing incredible in the fact that the wife did not hear of the death of her husband until she returned to the place where the apostles were assembled, working "signs and wonders among the people." The manifestly miraculous part of that awful judgment that followed so close upon the sin of Ananias and Sapphira should be reverently relegated to the domain to which it belongs; but we may, without presumption, suggest such considerations and explanations as are calculated to remove any apparent harshness in the attending incidents.

This is an example of the way in which an intimate acquaintance with Biblical localities and Oriental manners and customs may serve to clear up obscurities, and relieve the sacred narrative from seemingly serious perplexities.

Whether the explanation be found to be satisfactory or not in this instance, we may rest assured that every similar obscurity could be solved, were we in possession of all the facts and circumstances in such cases.

The large size of many of the rock-cut tombs about Jerusalem enables us to understand and explain some of the statements in the narratives of the resurrection of Christ. It is evident that the conversation between the women and the "young man," according to

[1] Luke ii. 41–46.

Mark, or the "two men" mentioned by Luke, took place within the sepulchre. Besides those two men there were present "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, and Joanna, and certain others with them"[1]—quite a company, in fact, requiring a room of considerable size. Now, there are many such sepulchres in the vicinity of Jerusalem still quite perfect, and large enough to answer all the demands of the gospel narratives. The new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, "that was hewn in stone," was one of such spacious sepulchres, made ready, in the providence of God, for that unique occasion, in order that the reality of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead might be confirmed by many witnesses.

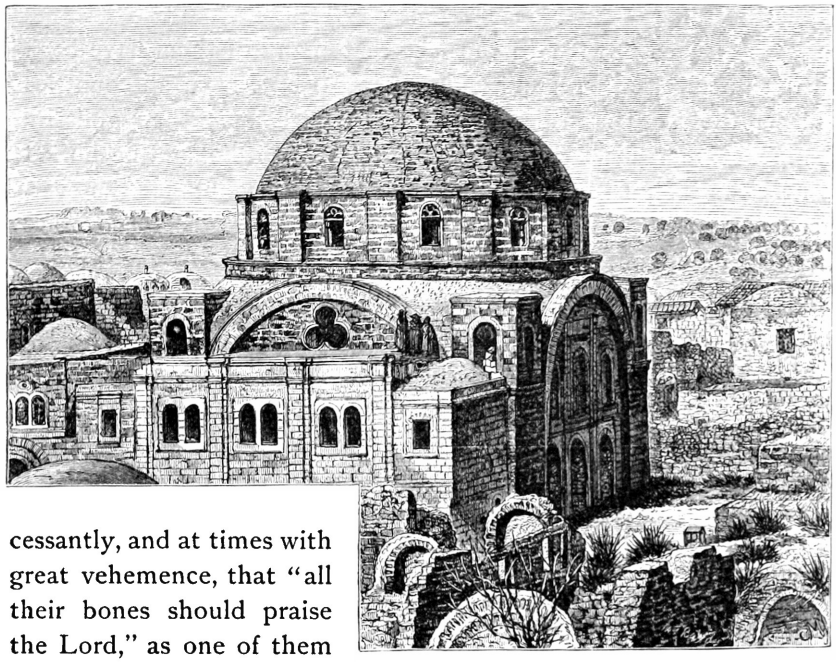
Re-entering the city, I passed down eastwards from Zion Gate through the Jewish quarter, or Hâret el Yehûd. It is the most squalid part of the city, and the inhabitants make no effort to clean their filthy lanes and streets. I was in search of the new synagogue, which, standing on the eastern brow of Zion, directly fronting the Haram area, is quite a conspicuous object. It is a large square building with a lofty dome, but without the least pretensions to architectural adornment on the outside, and with little to relieve the severe simplicity of the interior except some texts in Hebrew painted upon the walls.

It is a comparatively new edifice, and, therefore, has a fresh and cheerful appearance, in marked contrast to the wretched hovels around it. The Ashkenazim, to whom it belongs, are chiefly of German and Polish origin, and are under the protection of their several consular agents. The Sephardim, though mostly from Spain and Portugal, and speaking a corrupt Spanish, are, nevertheless, Turkish subjects, and the only Jewish community recognized by the Government. They have their synagogue in that vicinity, and there are other smaller ones in different parts of Hâret el Yehûd; but none of them are specially attractive.

I have a vivid recollection of my first visit to one of these synagogues, many years ago. The room had nothing in or about it like any other place of worship I ever entered, and the congregation was in character and keeping with the place. I never saw such an assemblage of old, pale, and woe-begone countenances.

[1] Mark xvi. 1–8; Luke xxiv. 1–13.

The behavior of the worshippers was very peculiar and somewhat ridiculous. The men, with broad-brimmed hats, or whatever other head-dress they possessed, were reading or muttering prayers, and while doing so they twisted and jerked and wriggled about in-



SYNAGOGUE OF THE ASHKENAZIM.

cessantly, and at times with great vehemence, that "all their bones should praise the Lord," as one of them explained the matter to me. When they began what was understood to be singing, it was the most outrageous concert of harsh nasal sounds I ever heard. It was Hebrew, too; but if David thus "praised the Lord," I should never have thought of calling him the sweet singer of Israel.

And yet, I suppose, it was much after this fashion that he and all his band of trained musicians did actually celebrate the praises of the Most High. You hear the same nasal twang and grating gutturals in the singing of every denomination throughout the East. The Orientals know nothing of harmony, and cannot appreciate it when heard, but they are often spellbound, or wrought up to transports of ecstasy, by this style of music; and no doubt the Temple

service, performed by those trained for it, stirred the deepest fountains of feeling in the vast assemblies of Israel gathered at Jerusalem on their great feasts.

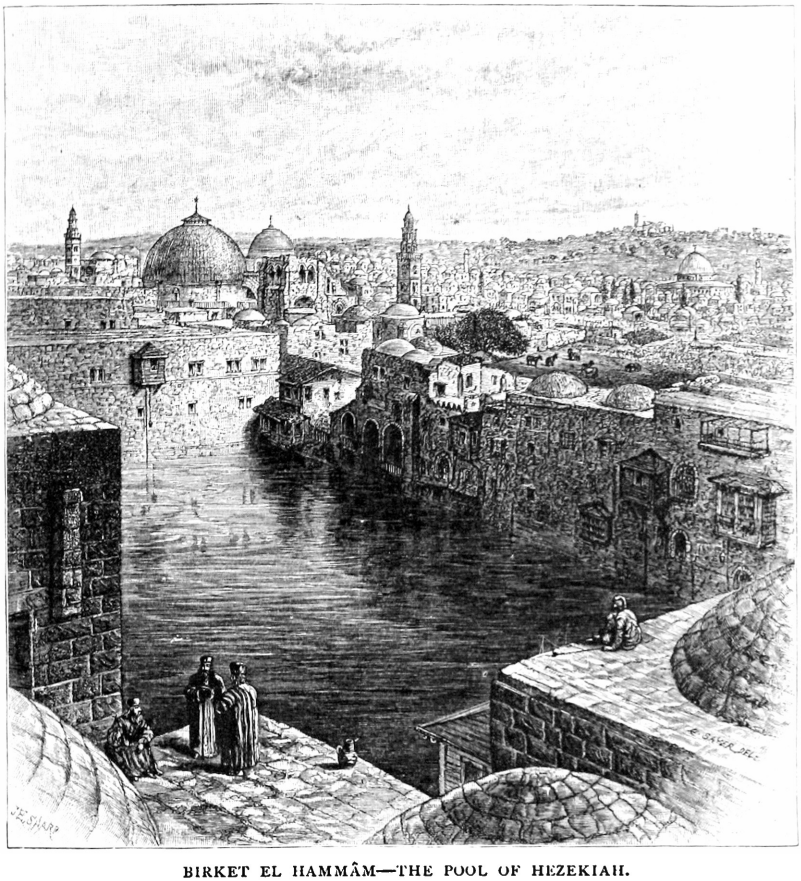
There is something inexpressibly sad in the features, deportment, and costume of these children of Abraham, as they grope about the ruins of their once joyous city.

This is partly owing to the fact that many of them have been great sinners elsewhere, and have come up here from all countries whither the Lord hath driven them, to purge away their guilt by abstinence, mortification, and devotion; then to die, and be buried as near the Holy City as possible. This also accounts for the ever-increasing multitude of their graves, which are gradually covering the side of Olivet. The Jews come to Jerusalem to die; and a community gathered for that specific purpose will not be particularly gay, or very careful about appearances.

In their Biblical and historical relations to the Holy City, the Jews form the most interesting class of her mingled population; but it is difficult for a stranger, while wandering amongst their wretched habitations, to have any other feeling in regard to them than that of compassion. They are miserably poor, and almost wholly dependent upon their coreligionists in Europe for their support. All their public buildings and charitable institutions have been established and are supported by the liberality of Sir Moses Montefiore, Baron Rothschild, and other wealthy Hebrews in distant countries.

After lunching at the hotel I ascended to the roof of that establishment, which commands an extensive view over the city and the immediate vicinity. The large pool of Hezekiah is directly below; and north of the pool the Holy Sepulchre, with the Greek and Latin convents, fill up the picture in that direction; while to the south-east looms the magnificent dome of es Sŭkhrah, and Olivet rises high above all, along the eastern sky. There are but few views in Jerusalem so satisfactory and comprehensive as this; but on what authority is the name of Hezekiah given to the pool below the hotel?

I am happy to accept the identification without hesitation. We read from the twentieth verse of the twentieth chapter of 2 Kings



BIRKET EL HAMMÂM—THE POOL OF HEZEKIAH.

that "Hezekiah made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city;" and that "this same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David."[1] He would certainly not allow the water to run waste, but doubtless made a pool for it somewhere in the west side of the city; and there is no suitable place for such a reservoir in the western part of Jerusalem but that occupied by what is now called the pool of Hezekiah. The water which fills that pool is still brought, by an underground conduit, from Birket el Mamilla, which is supposed to be "the upper Gihon."

[1] 2 Chron. xxxii. 30.

That the pool, when made by Hezekiah, was within the city, is evident from the very purpose for which the water was stopped above, and brought down to the west side of the city; for Hezekiah said, "Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?"[1] Let it represent, therefore, the work of Hezekiah, and bear his name. It is probably the pool Amygdalon, mentioned by Josephus as being near the monument of the high-priest John;[2] but the statement of that historian is too brief and vague to establish beyond question the identification.

The present pool is a remarkable work, in good preservation and in constant use. Its length from north to south is nearly two hundred and fifty feet, but there is reason to believe that originally it extended some sixty feet farther towards the north, under the Coptic convent. The width varies, but the average is not greater than one hundred and forty feet, and the depth is from twelve to fifteen feet. The bottom is the natural rock, cut away and levelled off on the western side, partly covered with cement and small stones, and dips towards the east. The first house I rented, when residing in the city many years ago, was one of those on the eastern side of the pool; and the water was drawn up by a bucket into the kitchen, but it was too impure for domestic purposes. It is now used, however, mostly to supply the neighboring bath; and on that account the natives give the pool itself the name of Birket el Hammâm—Pool of the Bath. If cleaned out, and properly protected from the filthy habits of the people, it might be made a real blessing to Jerusalem, instead of the abomination which it is now.

Wandering through the streets and markets this afternoon, I was interested and amused by the many things in the shops, most of which were entirely new and strange to me. I passed several times up and down Patriarch Street, merely to look at the small cupboard-like stalls, their picturesque owners, of all nations and costumes, their customers, and their wares. Heaps of beads of every imaginable color; crosses, large and small, of olive-wood or mother-of-pearl; shells with Scripture scenes rudely portrayed upon them; stone cups and candlesticks, white, black, and flesh-color; piles of Jerusalem soap, round, heart-shape, and without shape; gems and

[1] 2 Chron. xxxii. 4. [2] Wars, v. xi. 4.

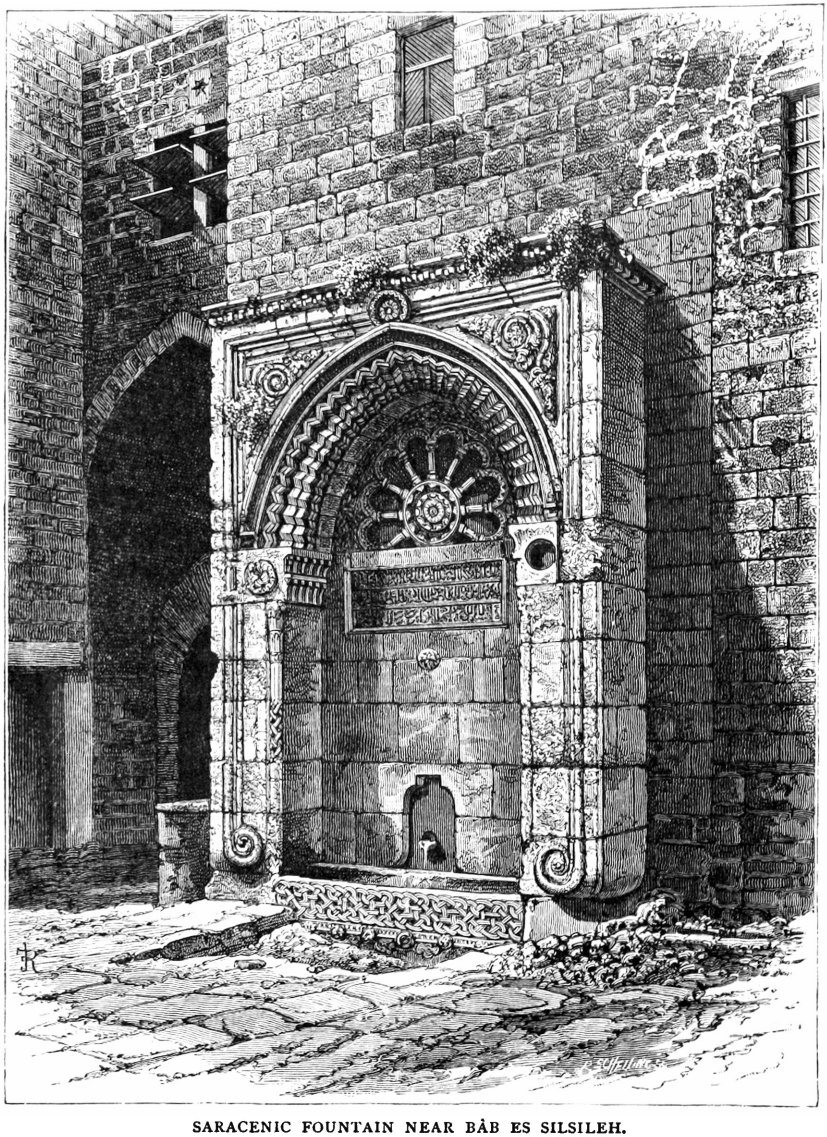
precious stones; antiques and snuffboxes; necklaces of coral or beads, red and black; rings, seals, and armlets of colored glass; and other like trinkets without end—from where do all those articles come? who manufactures them, and who purchases them?

Most of the glass trinkets are made in Hebron, though the finer qualities are imported from Europe. The candlesticks and similar articles are fabricated in Bethlehem. The rose or flesh colored stone is supposed to come from Hebron only, but it is found in many other localities, and even here about Jerusalem. It is intensely hard, and takes a fine polish. The black cups are made of a volcanic stone gathered from the Dead Sea desert, and apparently impregnated with bitumen or naphtha. It is called Hajr Mûsa—Stone of Moses. It has a peculiar smell, and the natives believe that a medicinal virtue is imparted to any liquid poured into a cup made of that stone. The mother-of-pearl and the coral come originally from the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and the quantity employed in these manufactures is quite surprising. Nearly every family in Bethlehem is engaged in some branch of this business, and many tons of those coarse relics and trinkets are annually carried to Jaffa, and shipped to Greece, Russia, and elsewhere.

From the markets I descended along David Street towards the Haram area, looking, as I went, into the short and crooked lanes on either side. Some of the walls of the houses have an antique appearance, and may have been erected anterior to the Crusades. The moulding, carving, and ornamental work on some of the windows, doors, and gate-ways is superior to anything which the modern Arab builders in this city can make.

The earlier Saracenic architecture, though entirely different from the classic styles, was well adapted for entrances to mosks, caravansaries, and similar public edifices. There are some handsome ornamented fountains of that character within the Haram area; but the best specimen I have seen is the fountain in the street that passes up to Bâb el Hadîd, the Iron Gate of the Haram enclosure.

Mr. Bartlett, who has given a fine picture of it in his "Jerusalem Revisited," thus describes it: "Here is presented to us, perhaps, the most striking combination of street scenery in Jerusalem. A small fountain, of Saracenic architecture, elaborately ornamented,



SARACENIC FOUNTAIN NEAR BÂB ES SILSILEH.

stands at the corner of the street, formerly supplied, as Mr. Williams tells us, by the aqueduct coming from Solomon's Pools at Etham; but affording no longer refreshment to the thirsty passenger, being ruinous and dry, and picturesquely overgrown with the

bright and trailing caper-plant. The gate at the end of the street, leading up from it to the mosque, is called Bâb en Nazir, or the 'Gate of the Inspector.' According to the same authority, it formerly bore the name of St. Michael the Archangel, 'because, according to the hesitating tradition preserved by an Arabic author, to this gate Gabriel may have bound the celestial beast, Borak, on the night of Mahammed's memorable journey'" to heaven.[1]

I continued my walk along David Street till I came to Bâb es Silsileh — the Gate of the Chain — the principal entrance to the Haram area. Near it is a Saracenic fountain, almost as beautiful as the one described by Mr. Bartlett. The interlaced wheel design on the basin, or water-trough, is perfect; and the long Arabic inscription is sharply cut and quite distinct. Above this is an elegant wheel and boss ornamentation, with an elaborately carved arch and cornice—altogether another gem of Saracenic architecture.

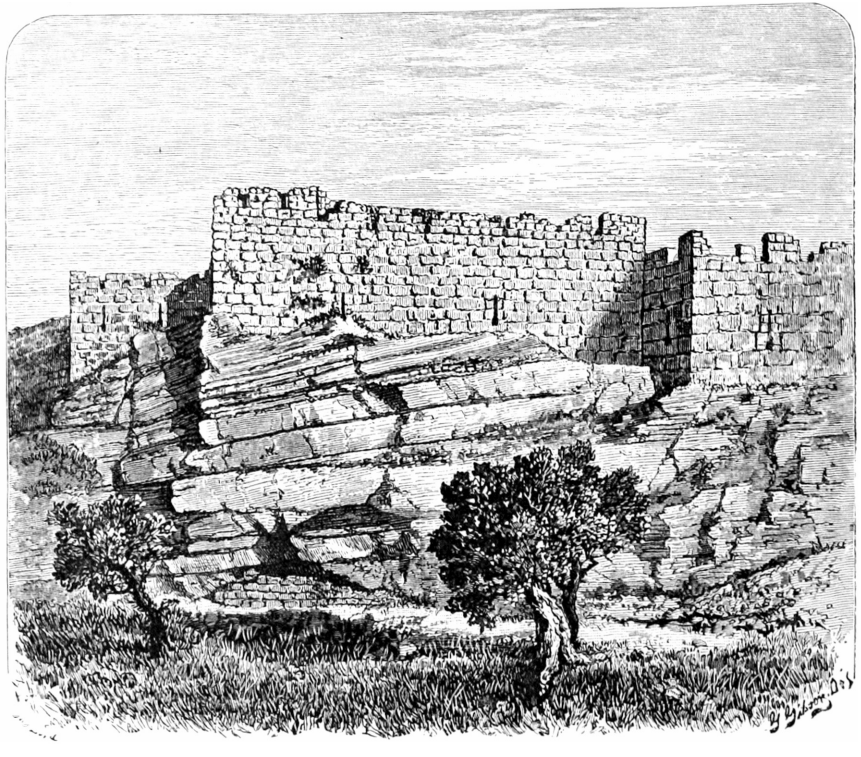
The numerous fountains of this order in the lower part of the city were, doubtless, supplied from the main canal that brought the water from the pools of Solomon to the Temple; but the pipes are now broken, and the fountains dry.

I was anxious to explore the Cotton Grotto, but was informed that there is no available entrance to it at present.

It is quite worth visiting, and should always be kept open and accessible. I have been there, and once spent a part of the forenoon examining it with a company of friends. Passing out at the Damascus Gate, we ascended the hill of rubbish east of it, and, just under the high precipice over which the wall is carried, we crept through a narrow opening, and, letting ourselves down some five feet on the inside, we stood within the cavern. Lighting our candles, we began to explore. For some distance the descent southwards was rapid, down a bed of soft earth. Pausing to take breath and look about, I was surprised at the dimensions of the cavern. The roof of rock is about thirty feet high, even above the heaps of rubbish, and is sustained by large shapeless columns of the original stone, left for that purpose by the quarriers, I suppose. On we went, down, down, from one depth to a lower, wandering now this now that way, and ever in danger of getting lost, or of falling over some

[1] Bart. Jer. Rev. p. 87, 88.

of the many declivities into the yawning darkness beneath. In some places we climbed with difficulty over large masses of rock, which appear to have been shaken down from the roof, suggesting to the nervous the possibility of being ground to powder by similar masses which hang overhead. In other parts our progress was arrested by pyramids of rubbish, which had fallen from above



ENTRANCE TO THE COTTON GROTTO. EXTERIOR OF THE NORTH WALL OF THE CITY.

through apertures in the vault. We found water trickling down in several places, and in one there was a small natural pool full to the brim. This trickling water has covered many parts with crystalline incrustations, pure and white—in others, stalactites hang from the roof, and stalagmites have grown up from the floor. The entire rock is remarkably white, and, though not very hard, will take a polish quite sufficient for architectural purposes.

The general direction of those excavations is south-east, and about parallel with the valley which descends from the Damascus Gate. They extend down towards the Temple area, and into those caverns many of the Jews probably retired when Titus took the Temple, as we read in Josephus. A great part of the very white stone of the Temple may have been taken from those subterranean quarries.

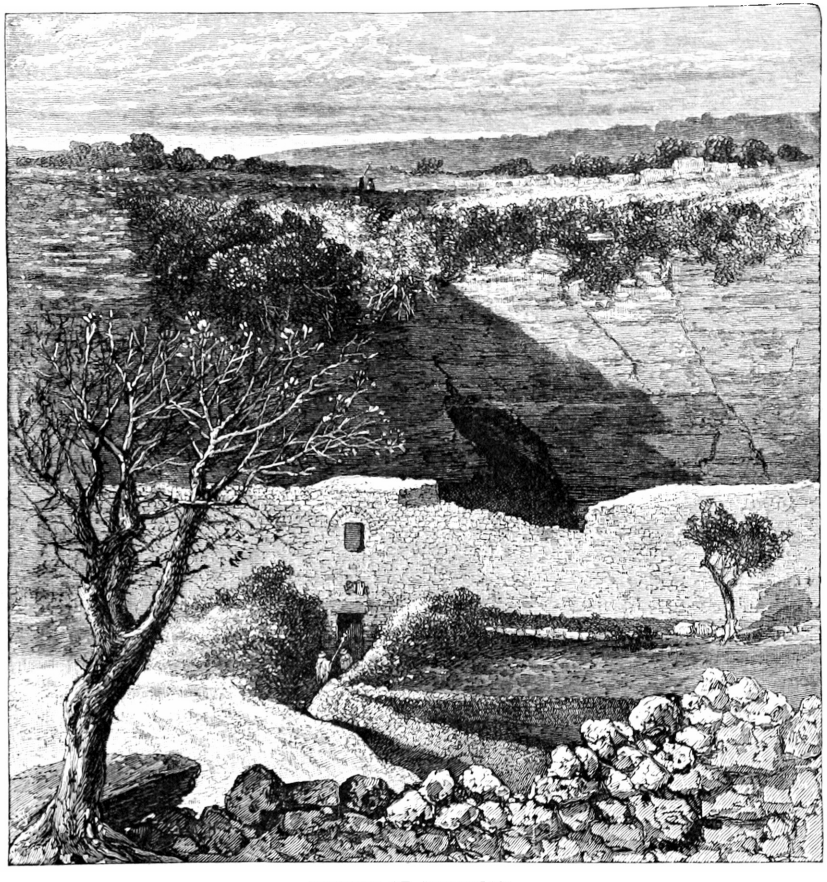
The Cotton Grotto is known as Mughârat el Kettân. It was explored by Dr. Barclay, who thus describes it: "It is entered from the little ridge of earth just east of the depression (apparently an old tank from the Damascus Gate), where the natural rock forms about half the height of the wall. It varies in width from twenty to one or two hundred yards, and extends about two hundred and twenty yards in the direction of the seraglio, terminating in a deep pit, in which we found the most *cubical* shaped head of a human skeleton that I ever saw."

As I could not gain admittance to the Cotton Grotto, I went to see that of Jeremiah. It is under the high tell of ez Zahara, about forty rods to the north-east of the Damascus Gate.

That tell, no doubt, once formed the northern termination of the ridge below which is the Cotton Grotto, and the rock between it and the wall of the city has been quarried away. Nor will the magnitude of this work stumble any one after examining those subterranean quarries of the grotto within and beneath the city. The high perpendicular cuttings which sustain the city wall are directly opposite to similar cuttings over Jeremiah's Grotto, and each is about fifty feet high.

The yawning cavern of Jeremiah extends under the cliff about one hundred and twenty feet; and there are buildings, graves, and sacred spots arranged irregularly about it, walled off, plastered, and whitewashed. Under the floor of the cavern are vast cisterns. Lighting our tapers, we descended about forty feet into the deepest one. The roof is supported by heavy square columns, and the whole, neatly plastered, is now used as a cistern. The water was pure, cold, and sweet. This grotto is in Moslem hands, but the keepers allowed us to explore every portion of it at our leisure.

In any other part of the world it would be considered a remark-



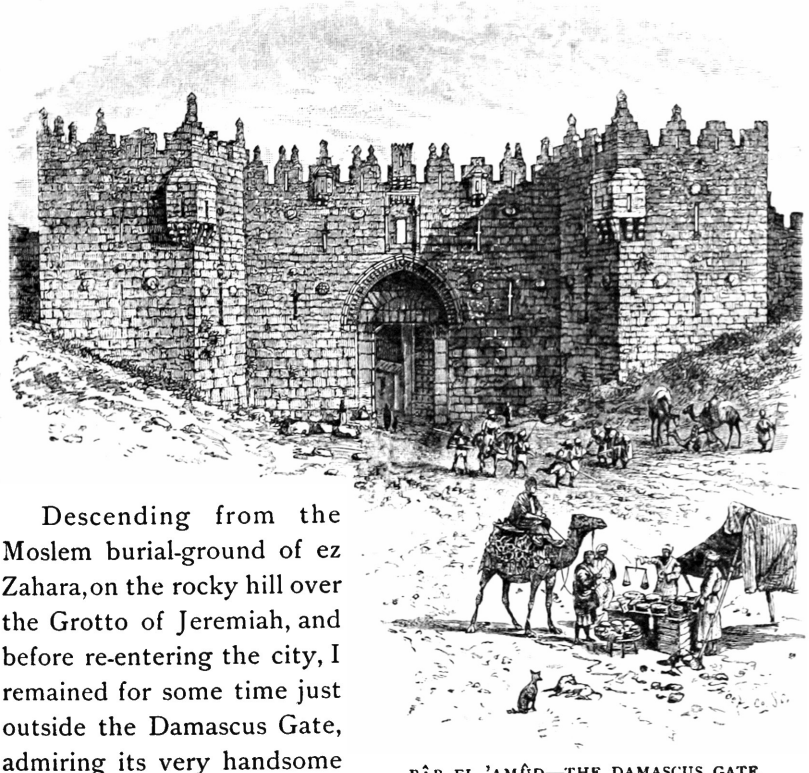
GROTTO OF JEREMIAH.

able work; but here, in the vicinity of such excavations as undermine the whole ridge within the city, it dwindles into insignificance. There is no evidence to connect it in any way with Jeremiah, who is said to have written his Lamentations there, and no modern theory has sufficient probability to claim attention.

The keepers of the grotto point out the prophet's tomb near by, and I was assured that the deep cistern was the dismal prison into which he was thrown.

This, however, like so many other traditions, is manifestly impossible, since it is certain, from the account given in the thirty-eighth chapter of Jeremiah, that the prison was in the city, and the

present grotto was not included within the walls until the time of Herod Agrippa, some six centuries after the imprisonment of the prophet. As to the tomb of Jeremiah, a divine providence has concealed it as effectually as that of Moses, and "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." Nothing is known, either, about the personal history of the prophet, from the time he was taken to Egypt with the remnant of his people, after the murder of Gedaliah by Ishmael, as we read in the forty-third chapter of Jeremiah.[1] It is probable that he died and was buried at Tahpanhes, in Egypt.



BÂB EL 'AMÛḌ—THE DAMASCUS GATE.

Descending from the Moslem burial-ground of ez Zahara, on the rocky hill over the Grotto of Jeremiah, and before re-entering the city, I remained for some time just outside the Damascus Gate, admiring its very handsome appearance. It is by far the most striking of the five entrances into Jerusalem that are now open, and also the one most availed of, I should think, to judge from the number of country people passing in and out through its lofty portal.

[1] Jer. xliii. 5–7.

The great highway northwards to Nâblus and Damascus leads from it, and must always have done so. From this fact, and from its position with reference to the city, a gate-way in this vicinity was a necessity, at least from the time when the second wall was built. The Arabic name of this gate is Bâb el 'Amûd—Gate of the Column—so called, probably, from a pillar in the vicinity; but what its special history is is not known.

The Damascus Gate, with its flanking towers, battlements, turrets, and projecting machicolations, on either side and above "the chamber over the gate," presents an appearance at once ornamental and imposing. Mr. Catherwood considered the arch of this gate as "one of those specimens conclusively proving that the pointed arch had its origin in Syria."

On both sides of the entrance are remains of ancient work, which have lately attracted the attention and discussion of students of Jerusalem's topography. Captain Warren commenced excavations on both sides of the gate, but was not allowed by the authorities to complete them. He says: "This gate is at present built of two very different styles of masonry, the older portion of which is probably of the same age as the portions of the Sanctuary wall." There was, in former times, a large tank, or cistern, near this gate-way; and while excavating on the east of the road, outside the gate, Captain Warren found a flight of steps leading down to that tank, which, when used, "was probably an open pool or sea. North of these steps was found a very ancient wall running east and west. The stones are draughted, and similar to those at the wailing-place [of the Jews], but appear not to be *in situ*, there being other stones in the wall of more recent date. Nearly opposite the gate the wall suddenly stopped, and, on digging round, was found to be ten feet six inches in thickness, the north side being of a different style of masonry to the south, but of similar age." The results of these explorations are important, since they confirm the opinion that there was at that point a city wall and gate-way at least as ancient as the time of Herod the Great. The special interest attaching to this fact is owing to its possible bearing on the question of the location of the Holy Sepulchre.

On my way back to the tents I followed the street leading

southwards from the Damascus Gate until it united with the Via Dolorosa, and then turning eastwards, I passed under the Ecce Homo, by the so-called house of Pilate, and beneath the arched vault of the Tower of Antonia, and thence out of the city by St. Stephen's Gate.

The gate takes its name from the monkish tradition that there the saintly Stephen was stoned to death by the enraged Jews, amongst whom was Saul, who afterwards, as Paul, became the great apostle to the Gentiles.[1] Its present Arabic name, however, is Bâb el Asbât, according to the Moslems, or Bâb Sitty Meryam—the Gate of the Tribes—or that of My Lady Mary. The latter is the name given to it by the Christians, probably because the Church of the Virgin is in the valley of the Kidron below.

I took a seat on the hill-side near the pool just north of the gate, which, though small, bears the long name of Birket Hammâm Sitty Meryam, which, being interpreted by Salîm, means the pool of My Lady Mary. There is still some water in it, and people frequently came and carried away jars of it into the city.

The hill-side south of the gate is crowded with Moslem graves, some of them having large and picturesque domes, now mostly in ruins. There is one of the spots about Jerusalem to which the modern traveller hastens on his arrival from the west; and there, in the afternoon, the weary pilgrim may rest under the shadow of the city wall, and gaze on a prospect of deep interest, not only to himself but to the entire Christian world.

The declining sun poured a flood of golden light into the lower valley of Jehoshaphat and over the western face of Olivet. With all the sites below me, and the different paths leading to and from them, I have become quite familiar. There were the church and tomb of Mary, and the Grotto of the Agony. A short distance farther up the mount was the Garden of Gethsemane, and southwards the tombs of Absalom, Jehoshaphat, St. James, and the other sepulchral monuments. On the face of the mount the paths appear which lead up to the village of et Tûr, and to the top of Olivet, where is the conspicuous minaret from which the best view of the Holy City is obtained.

[1] Acts vi. 8–15; vii. 1–60; viii. 1; xxii. 20.



THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, AND THE ROAD TO BETHANY.

Below the Garden of Gethsemane is seen the identical road over the southern slope of Olivet, leading on to Bethany, and passing the spot where Jesus beheld the city and wept over it. And up the mount eastwards is the more direct path, over which, it is supposed by some, Jesus led his disciples "as far as to Bethany;" and, having "lifted up his hands, and blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." If I resided in Jerusalem I should often

resort to the neighborhood of St. Stephen's Gate in the cool of the evening, and look out upon that landscape, so suggestive of topics for solemn and devout meditation.

Looking down upon the city this morning from the roof of the hotel above the pool of Hezekiah, and comparing the area with that of other great capitals, the question how Jerusalem could have accommodated the vast multitudes that resided in or resorted to her continually, occurred to my mind with unwonted emphasis. I found it impossible to ascertain the number of the present inhabitants of the city, some estimating it at sixteen thousand, others as high as thirty-five thousand.

You are aware that the Turkish Government does not take any reliable census, and hence all statements founded upon its estimates must be mere approximations. It is certain, however, that the population of Jerusalem is steadily, though not rapidly, increasing. My own acquaintance with the city extends over nearly half a century, and during that long period I suppose the population has doubled —that is, from twelve thousand in 1833 to something more than twenty-five thousand at the present day. The Jews have increased more than any other class, and probably amount, in round numbers, to ten thousand, the Moslems to eight or nine thousand, and the Christians of all sects to six or seven thousand.

This gives a total population of over twenty-five thousand. But what is even thirty thousand to the vast multitudes who in former times dwelt in Jerusalem, or were accommodated within its walls?

This question has perplexed many before you, but the problem has been embarrassed by extreme assumptions. We are not required to find room for more than two hundred thousand regular inhabitants at Jerusalem in her highest prosperity and largest expansion. As to the two million five hundred and sixty-five thousand assembled at the Passover, in the time when Cestius was governor, or the one million two hundred thousand shut in by Titus and his army, they were not citizens, but strangers. Josephus has given us an elaborate and minute topographical description of the city, from which, if no mistake has crept into his numbers, it is certain that the area within the walls did not much exceed one mile

square. Other statements give larger dimensions, but we shall adhere to the thirty-three furlongs of Josephus for the entire circuit of the walls. Allowing for the Temple, there could not have remained more than the superficies of about one mile square for dwellings, markets, offices, shops, streets, pools, and all the other purposes and demands of a great city.

Reasoning from these data, and from the statistics of modern European cities, Mr. Fergusson, in his ingenious but reckless critique, reduces the population to a very low figure indeed, and scouts the numbers of Josephus with utter contempt. But there are many circumstances overlooked or overleaped by Mr. Fergusson which must be carefully considered and allowed for, if we would arrive at even an approximation to the truth. I do not believe in his basis of calculation, that no modern European city has more than twenty-five thousand inhabitants to the square mile. But, admitting this extreme statement, it does not follow, because modern cities have only this number, that therefore Oriental cities in olden times had no more. We must remember that those ancient cities were built within walls; that gardens, parks, and open spaces were excluded, and the entire area occupied with buildings; that the streets were narrow, and covered over with houses; that stores, shops, markets, etc., were small, and had dwellings in the rear and above them; that the houses were more than one story high; that Orientals have even now but little furniture, and can and do crowd into very small apartments—an entire family in one room—many families in a single house; that the topography of Jerusalem, broken into valleys, is favorable to the erection of houses having many stories, as in certain parts of Edinburgh, for example; and, finally, that the pressure of a constant necessity would lead both the Government and the people to make provision to receive within the walls the largest possible number. These things considered, it will not appear unreasonable to allow for ancient Jerusalem twice as many rooms on the ground-floor as can be found in a mile square of any modern European city, and double the number of people, on an average, to each room. This would give one hundred thousand inhabitants upon Mr. Fergusson's own data. But there were, doubtless, two, if not three, stories to the houses; and upper stories have more rooms

and larger available space than the lower. This at once furnishes accommodation for at least two hundred thousand inhabitants; and no impartial person who has opportunity to examine modern Oriental cities, or to observe how densely the poor Jews can and do pack themselves away in the most wretched hovels, will deem these calculations extravagant.

But we are prepared to lay aside all speculations and theories, and take Jerusalem as she now is for the basis of calculation. I have seen more than twenty-five thousand people in the present city; nor was it overcrowded. Then it must be remembered that a large part of Bezetha and of Acra is sparsely inhabited; the space taken up by the Dome of the Rock is much larger than was that of the Temple; the parts about Bâb el Mughâribeh and the south-east end of Zion are either ploughed fields or overrun with cactus; the entire western face of Zion within the city walls is occupied by the gardens of the Armenian convent; the Mûristân is vacant; convents, churches, and mosks take up much room; and, finally, that even in those parts occupied by dwellings the houses are generally low, small, badly contrived, and many of them in ruins. All these things taken into account, we can readily admit that, if the whole area was covered over with high houses, economically built, a hundred thousand inhabitants could find homes within the present walls. It only remains to state that the southern half of Zion, all of Ophel, and the broad expansion of the lower Tyropœon, is without the walls on the south; and on the north, the entire space enclosed by the third wall, about which Josephus speaks in such glowing terms, is now occupied by olive-groves. Take in the whole, cover it with habitations as it once was, and I hesitate not to say that two hundred thousand inhabitants could dwell within the walls of Jerusalem. We are not obliged to assume so high a figure even, for neither the Bible nor Josephus, nor any other ancient author, gives such a number for the actual resident population of the Holy City.

May we not assume that there were extensive suburbs in all directions around the city, and that a large population dwelt in them?

During the long periods of peace and safety this was certainly

the case; nor is it difficult to explain how the vast multitudes that gathered here to keep the great feasts could be accommodated. Take even the astounding statistics of Josephus himself, and suppose that the two millions and a half who partook of the Passover at the time of Cestius was neither an exaggeration nor an exception, it is by no means certain that one-fifth of this multitude sat down to the Paschal Supper within the walls. The Jews originally were dwellers in tents. It is certain that in some parts of the country they did not abandon that custom, at least not until after many generations. The proverb, "To your tents, O Israel!" was not a mere Oriental metaphor; and the tribes, when they assembled at small places, such as Gilgal and Shiloh, must have come up with their tents, or, at least, prepared to sleep out-doors. The feasts occurred in the warm, non-rainy months; and throughout all the southern part of Palestine the people at that season do not hesitate to sleep in the open air, on the house-tops, under trees, vines, or even in the gardens. Now, not only two but half a dozen millions of people could find room to eat and sleep on the mountains which are "round about Jerusalem." At such times, no doubt, every garden was thrown open, and every available spot occupied. We may gather this much from two incidents in the history of our Lord: When he drew near the city, and sent two disciples to prepare the Passover, they were to say to the man whom they should meet bearing a pitcher, "Where is the guestchamber?" implying the existence of such apartments, and the custom of allowing the use of them as a matter of course on such occasions.[1] Again, after supper our Lord went out into a garden in Olivet.[2] Neither he nor his disciples owned a garden there, but the matter thus mentioned clearly implies that such gardens were on those occasions left open for all who needed them.

I have often tried to realize the appearance of these valleys and hills around Jerusalem during the great feasts. Covered with olive-groves, fruit-orchards, and terraced vineyards, beneath whose friendly bowers many a happy family and neighborhood group assembled, rising rank over rank to the very top of the mountains, I marvel that no artist has thought of reproducing this scene. In-

[1] Mark xiv. 12–17. [2] John xviii. 1.

numerable thousands gathered to the Passover, with happy children, busy servants, festooned victims, and all the joyful host, in picturesque costumes, hastening hither and thither, as worship, or business, or pleasure prompted, furnishing all the elements for a magnificent and impressive panorama.

These hills and valleys and mounts lie all around the Holy City, as if on purpose for such convocations. The artist might arrange the tribes, with their ensigns and standards, as they were commanded to pitch their tents about the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Judah would then occupy this Mount of Olives; for that tribe, with Issachar and Zebulon, encamped on the east side, towards the rising of the sun. Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, with their standards, pitched on the south; on the west, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin; and on the north, Dan, and Asher, and Naphtali.[1] Thus they continued to pitch and march for forty years. Now, it is not improbable that when the Tabernacle was in Gilgal and in Shiloh this same order was preserved; and, as far as circumstances permitted, it might have been kept up even after the Temple at Jerusalem took the place of the Tabernacle. Without some well-arranged system, there would be endless confusion in such vast assemblies. Each tribe, therefore, had its proper station on these noble hills. Every important city may also have had its appropriate quarter, every village its terrace, every family its shady tree or sheltered arbor. Fancy, now, if you can, this great city, thus surrounded by all Israel, assembled here to worship; the glorious Temple towering up on Moriah; the smoke of victims and the clouds of incense ascending up to heaven from morning to night; while Temple, court, hall, street, valley, and hill-side echo and re-echo with the songs of Zion from millions of devout and joyful worshippers of the living God. Who would not join the sons of Korah in their triumphal psalm: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge. Let Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof

[1] Numb. ii.

Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."[1]

I find two statements in regard to the history and early conquest of Jerusalem which seem to be irreconcilable. The last verse of the fifteenth chapter of Joshua reads thus: "As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day." But in Judges i. 8 it is said: "Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire." How can this apparent contradiction be explained?

Josephus probably gives the true solution of the difficulty. Describing the capture of Bezek, and its king, Adoni-bezek, he says: "So they carried him alive as far as Jerusalem, and when he was dead they buried him in the earth, and went on still in taking the cities; and when they had taken the greater part of them they besieged Jerusalem. And when they had taken the lower city—which was not under a considerable time—they slew all the inhabitants; but the upper city was not to be taken without great difficulty, through the strength of its walls and the nature of the place. For which reason they removed their camp to Hebron."[2]

From this it appears that the upper city was not captured until taken by David.[3] There is, therefore, no contradiction in the statements found in Joshua and Judges.

The special purpose of our pilgrimage does not call for, nor will it admit of, a detailed history of Jerusalem. The annals of a city whose story runs down parallel with the ages for more than forty centuries cannot well be condensed into a few paragraphs. Numberless sketches and epitomes of it have been made, and not a few elaborate volumes written on the subject, and yet a complete and adequate history of the Holy City is still to be furnished to the Christian world.

From Abraham's sacrificial visit to the conquest under Joshua there is nothing said about Jerusalem. At that time it bore the

[1] Psa. xlviii. [2] Ant. v. ii. 2. [3] 2 Sam. v. 6–11.

name of Jebus, and appears to have been already a very strong place. Though the king of it was slain in the great battle of Gibeon,[1] the city did not fall into the conqueror's hands, nor was it until the reign of David that the Jebusites were finally subdued.[2] Having taken the stronghold, he transferred the seat of government at once from Hebron to Zion; and ever afterwards Jerusalem appears as the capital of the Jewish commonwealth, and the centre of the Hebrew faith and worship.

How much importance do you attach to the statement of Jerome, that the Salem of Melchizedek was near Beisan?

Not enough to disturb my settled belief that he was mistaken. I follow Josephus, and am convinced that his account coincides with the Bible; but the old tradition that Melchizedek was no other than Shem is an improvement on the Jewish historian. Such an origin for the city of the great King is so gratifying that one is reluctant to carry research into the cold region of critical scepticism. Let us, therefore, believe, if we can, that here the son of Noah founded the City of Peace, reigned in righteousness, and was priest of the Most High God. Perhaps it was near the altar of Melchizedek or Shem that Abraham, in a figure, offered up Isaac—type of that other sacrifice, when an infinitely greater Father offered his only-begotten Son on this same mountain.

Josephus, near the close of his Jewish Wars, gives the following rapid sketch of the history of Jerusalem:[3] "He who first built it was a potent man amongst the Canaanites, and is in our tongue called the Righteous King—for such he really was—on which account he was the first priest of God, and first built a temple, and called the city Jerusalem, which was formerly called Salem. However, David, the King of the Jews, ejected the Canaanites, and settled his own people therein. It was demolished entirely by the Babylonians four hundred and seventy-seven years and six months after him; and from King David, who was the first king of the Jews who reigned therein, to this destruction, were one thousand one hundred and seventy-nine years. It had been many times besieged and taken—first by David, then by Shishak, King of Egypt, afterwards by Nebuchadnezzar, then by Antiochus, after him by Pom-

[1] Josh. x. [2] 2 Sam. v. 6–11. [3] Wars, vi. 10.

pey, then by Sosius, then by Herod, and finally by Titus, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, on the eighth day of the month Gorpieus—September." He closes the sad story with this affecting remark: "Yet hath not its great antiquity, nor its vast riches, nor the diffusion of its nation over all the habitable earth, nor the greatness of the veneration paid to it on a religious account, been sufficient to preserve it from being destroyed."

The siege of Jerusalem occupied Titus four months and twenty-five days—from April 11th, A.D. 70, to the 7th of September. After this destruction we hear but little of Jerusalem until the reign of Hadrian. No doubt it was speedily occupied by both Jews and Christians; and I am disposed to credit Eusebius, who supposes that the city was not wholly destroyed by Titus. Such a thing is scarcely to be imagined. Many of the lower vaulted rooms were doubtless uninjured, and in those a considerable population could reside. Indeed, it soon acquired somewhat the proportion of a city and the character of a fortress; for when the Jews rebelled against Hadrian, about A.D. 132, it was able to make a prolonged resistance. Having destroyed it, Hadrian built a new town, which he called Ælia, and for several generations afterwards Jerusalem was only spoken of under this heathen name. Constantine restored its ancient name, and greatly enriched and adorned it with splendid churches and other edifices. Thenceforward it became the grand centre of pilgrimages from all parts of the Christian world, and such it has continued to be down to the present hour.

Jerusalem, during the last fourteen centuries, has suffered terrible calamities, and undergone many important changes. It was taken by the Persians, under Chosroes II., with great slaughter. The Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre was burned, and the city sacked and pillaged, about the year 614; and in 636 it was permanently wrested from the Christians by the Khalif Omar. From this event to the appearance of the Crusaders before her walls, about the first of June, 1099, the history of the city is almost a blank. There were, however, frequent contests between the Moslem rulers of Egypt and of Syria for its possession; and it suffered many calamities from its peculiar position and character, being sacred to Muhammedan, Christian, and Jew.

The Franks kept possession of it less than one hundred years, for it was given up to Saladin in 1187, and from that day to this it has remained in the hands of the Muhammedans. Saracen and Osmanly in succession have held it, and the flag of the Turk still floats over the Tower of David. Such is a rapid survey of the long and eventful history of Jerusalem, now called by all native sects and denominations el Kuds—the Holy. If it had existed two thousand one hundred and seventy-seven years when overthrown by Titus, as stated by Josephus, its age at present is about three thousand nine hundred and eighty-six years. More than any other city, it has influenced the moral and religious character of the human race—AND THE END IS NOT YET!

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EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED.

AIN, Hebrew EN, Fountain.
BAB, Door.
BEIT, Hebrew BETH, House.
BÎR, Hebrew BEER, Well or Cistern.
DEIR, Convent.
JEBEL, Mountain.
JISR, Bridge.
KHÂN, Inn or Caravansary.
KUL'AT, Castle.
MERJ, Plain.
MUKÂM, Shrine or Saint's Tomb.
MUZÂR, Shrine or Saint's Tomb.
NÂBA', Fountain.
NAHR, River.
NEBY, Prophet.
TELL, Hill or Mound.
WADY, Valley or Stream.
WELY, Saint's Tomb.

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